THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAURICE BLONDEL'S TREATISE
HISTORY AND DOGMA
IN THE FRENCH MODERNIST CRISIS

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SYNOPSIS

Maurice Blondel (1861-1949) wrote History and Dogma at the apogee of the French Modernist crisis, in an effort to explain scientifically how critical methods applied to Scripture can be reconciled with doctrinal formulations. He rejected two incomplete and incompatible solutions, which he labelled extrinsicism and historicism. Extrinsicism represents the extreme tendency to impose dogmatic conclusions on historical science, while historicism represents the extreme tendency to reduce dogmatic formulations to what can be ascertained by history alone. These opposite extremes reveal an idealistic illusion which confuses reality with intellectual abstractions. For an intermediary between history and dogma, Blondel pointed to Tradition. The synthesis is realized neither in the facts alone, nor in the ideas alone, but in Tradition which embraces the whole life of the Church, the facts of Sacred History, the efforts of theological reasoning, and the accumulated experiences of the faithful under the direction of a divinely assisted Pope. Blondel believed that his philosophy of L'Action could supply the rational justification for such a conception of Tradition.

In efforts to interpret accurately History and Dogma, I have consulted the extensive literature, as well as the archives of Blondel, Laberthonnière, and Loisy. I have interpreted this treatise in the context of Blondel's extensive correspondence preceding, during, and following its publication.

Ever since Blondel wrote the Letter on Apologetics, in 1896, in which he criticized harshly the pseudo-philosophy of the neoscholastic revival, and proposed a frank acceptance of modern critical philosophy as the right method of approaching the religious problem, he was accused of being an innovator seeking to undermine traditional beliefs, and the father of philosophical Modernism. History and Dogma was written as a personal apology for his own orthodoxy. His spiritual advisors, Wehrlé and Mourret, pressed Blondel to write a rebuttal of Loisy in order to dissociate himself from a man condemned by Rome. Blondel insisted that "any specific allusion would be a calumny." From the documents examined in this dissertation, it should be clear that Loisy and Hügel were even less inclined towards historicism than Batiffol and Lagrange, who did expect to prove the supernatural nature of the Gospel and the Church by history alone.

History and Dogma saved Blondel from a condemnation when Pius X issued the syllabus Lamentabili and the encyclical Pascendi; but it was only in the relaxed atmosphere preceding Vatican II that its influence was really felt through the impact of the "nouvelle théologie," which he partly inspired. Blondel's conception of Tradition was endorsed by Vatican II.

PREFACE

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the significance of Maurice Blondel's treatise, History and Dogma, written in 1904, at the apogee of the French Modernist crisis. An empirical approach was chosen in preference to a dogmatic one: the question raised here is not whether or not Modernism is a heresy condemned by the Roman Catholic church, but what actually happened, and more specifically, what role Blondel played in this crisis through his personal relations, his abundant correspondence, and his published articles. Whatever conclusions can be derived from this dissertation will stem from the events and writings examined and interpreted in the light of their original setting.

The research done for this dissertation includes the following stages. First of all, I read the available literature on the French Modernist crisis in general, and on Maurice Blondel in particular, and engaged in correspondence with several prominent Blondelian scholars, both in the United States and in France.

During a year of research in France, I was fortunate to obtain from the family of Blondel the permission to consult his private archives. At the University of Louvain library, where the main bulk of Blondel's archives are being microfilmed and indexed, I obtained photocopies of all the notes and rough drafts for History and Dogma, plus photocopies of important letters related to that treatise. I read several volumes of typewritten copies of the most important Blondelian papers at the residence of his daughter in Paris. At the Bibliothèque Nationale, I consulted several publications which are unavailable in the United States and several important documents preserved in the archives room. Some rare books and periodicals were read at the Jesuit library of Chantilly. Thanks to a special permission, I was able to consult the private archives of Lucien Laberthonnière and Alfred Loisy.

The third stage of the research consisted in the choice of a chronological sequence, in preference to a systematic or thematic presentation, to illustrate Blondel's role in the French Modernist crisis. I established a chronology of the most important letters which Blondel wrote and received during the crisis, as well as the significant articles which he or others wrote on the problems raised by the crisis. At this stage of the research, I drew from all the published and unpublished sources available in order to restore chronologically and integrally letters and articles which previously had been published wholly or in part in other syntheses.

In the first chapter of this dissertation, there is a sketch of the fundamental literature on the French Modernist crisis. Then follows a sketch of Maurice Blondel before 1902. In that fateful year, Alfred Loisy published L'Evangile et L'Eglise which was the spark to set off the conflagration of Modernism within the Roman Catholic church. In the third chapter, I have considered the various reactions to that event, including those of Blondel. Compromised in the crisis, Blondel was advised by two Parisian priests, Johannes Wehrlé and Fernand Mourret, to separate himself from Loisy and baron von Hügel. In the fourth chapter, I examine the correspondence of Blondel with Loisy and Hügel during 1903. The fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters deal respectively with the three articles which Blondel published on History and Dogma in the semi-monthly, La Quinzaine. Each article is situated in the context of the correspondence which preceded and followed it. One can thus notice the various influences which Blondel received and exercised in his composition and publication of History and Dogma. A final chapter sketches briefly the aftermaths of the publication of History and Dogma and indicates very succinctly the official condemnation of the Modernist movement.

More than anyone else, the author of this dissertation is aware that his compilation is but a sketch of a very complicated crisis within the history of Christianity. Bringing forth new evidence, drawn from private archives unexploited until now, he hopes that his first sketch will prove valuable to other scholars for further study and research. He is convinced that the role of Maurice Blondel in the French Modernist crisis will appear less one-sided than in previous studies on the same subject.

The author is grateful, first of all to Dr. Sydney Ahlstrom, who suggested the choice of Maurice Blondel as a significant figure during the French Modernist crisis. He is grateful also to Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan, professor of ecclesiastical history, who provided him with wise guidance. More particularly, he acknowledges the valuable time and effort which Dr. George Lindbeck spent in the reading and correction of this dissertation. The author acknowledges also the innumerable services rendered by the various librarians at the Yale Sterling library, the Yale Divinity School library, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Jesuit library of Chantilly, and the University of Louvain library. Mr. Charles Blondel and Mrs. Elisabeth Flory, son and daughter of Maurice Blondel, provided the necessary permissions to consult the Blondelian archives. The author is grateful to

Mrs. Dernis and Mrs. Canet respectively for the permissions to consult the private archives of Lucien Laberthonnière and Alfred Loisy. He recognizes also the valuable advice offered by some historians of French Modernism such as Alec Vidler and Norman Pittenger, but especially the most recent and knowledgeable authority, Emile Poulat, a director at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris. He wishes to express his gratitude to innumerable experts on Blondel, Hügel, Laberthonnière, and Loisy, who offered generously valuable information and explanations: Marc Boegner, Henri Bouillard, Henri de Lubac, Henry Duméry, Henri Gouhier, Jean Lacroix, Réne Marlé, John J. McNeill, Marcel Méry, Maurice Nédoncelle, Luciano Pazzaglia, Marie Rougier, Raymond Saint-Jean, James Somerville, Claude Tresmontant, Claude Troisfontaines, Jean Trouillard, René Virgoulay, and others. Mademoiselle Nathalie Panis, who was Blondel's student, then his secretary for over eighteen years, and the curator of his archives until 1965, who is in constant correspondence with all the Blondelian scholars throughout the world, was generous with information, advice, and guidance. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to my dear wife, Joan, whose love, patience, and judicious observations encouraged me in the research and writing of this thesis.

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INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS

A = M. Blondel, L'Action (1893). Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950

AB = Archives of Maurice Blondel: the major part of which is at Louvain where it is being microfilmed and classified; portions of them are in Paris

AL = E. Poulat, ed. Alfred Loisy: sa vie, son oeuvre par A. Houtin et F. Sartiaux Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1960

AP = R. Saint-Jean, L'Apologétique philosophique: Blondel 1893-1913. Paris: Aubier, 1966

APC = Annales de philosophie chrétienne

APL = A. Loisy, Autour d'un petit livre. Paris: Picard, 1903

BC = H. Bouillard, Blondel et le Christianisme. Paris: Seuil, 1961

BL = C. Tresmontant, ed. Correspondance philosophique Blondel-Laberthonnière. Paris: Seuil, 1961

BLE = Bulletin de littérature écclesiastique de Toulouse

BV = [H. de Lubac, ed.] Correspondance Blondel-Valensin. Paris: Aubier, 1957-1965

CCM = R. Marlé, ed. Au Coeur de la Crise moderniste. Paris: Aubier, 1960

CI = [E. Flory, ed.] Carnets intimes de Maurice Blondel. 2 vols. Paris: Cerf, 1961-1966

CL = C. Troisfontaines, "Le Christ 'lien substantiel' dans les premiers écrits de Maurice Blondel," (Dissertatio ad lauream in facultate theologica). Romae: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1965

EB = *Etudes Blondéliennes*. 3 vols. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951-1954

EE = A. Loisy, *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*. Paris: Picard, 1902

EPR = L. Laberthonnière, *Essais de philosophie religieuse.* Réédition. Paris: Seuil, 1966

FH = J. Steinmann, *Friedrich von Hügel*. Paris: Aubier, 1962

HD = M. Blondel, ... *and History and Dogma*. Tr. A. Dru. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965. See *L*.

HDC = E. Poulat, *Histoire, dogme et critique dans la crise moderniste*. Paris: Castermann, 1962

K = Fonds Klein, Bibliothèque Nationale. N.a. f. 14039

L = M. Blondel, *Letter on Apologetics and* ... Tr. I. Trethowan. See *HD* above

LAB = Fonds Laberthonnière, Bibliothèque Nationale. (Over 200 volumes of partly classified correspondence and manuscripts).

LAC = Fonds Lacroix, Bibliothèque Nationale. N.a.f. 24401-24406

LOI = Fonds Loisy, Bibliothèque Nationale. (52 volumes of partly classified correspondence and manuscripts).

LP = [C. Blondel, ed.] *Lettres philosophiques de Maurice Blondel*. Paris: Aubier, 1961

MCM = F. Rodé, *Le miracle dans la controverse moderniste*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1965

MEM = A. Loisy, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire religieuse de notre temps*. Paris: Nourry, 1930-1931.

MM = A. Vidler, *The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church*. Cambridge, 1934.

MMd = Typewritten copy of unpublished papers from the archives of Blondel done under the supervision of N. Panis and M. Méry. (over 77 volumes)

MOD = J. Rivière, *Le modernisme dans l'Eglise*. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1929

PT = R. Virgoulay, "Philosophie et théologie en dialogue: Etude sur les premiers écrits de Maurice Blondel." (Thèse de doctorat en théologie aux Facultés catholiques de Lyon, 1963)

Q = *La Quinzaine*

RB = *La Revue biblique*

RC = L. Laberthonnière, *Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec*. Réédition. Paris: Seuil, 1966

RCF = *La Revue du clergé français*

RMM = *La Revue de métaphysique et de morale*

RR = H. Duméry, *Raison et Religion dans la Philosophie de l'Action*. Paris: Seuil, 1963

RSR = *Recherches de science religieuse*

RT = *La Revue thomiste*

SC = *La Science catholique*

SL = B. Holland, ed. *Selected Letters of Baron von Hugel*. London, 1927

TH = L. da Veiga Coutinho, *Tradition et histoire dans la controverse moderniste*. Rome: Université Gregorienne, 1954

VF = *La Vérité française*

CHAPTER I

CURSORY VIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE FRENCH MODERNIST CRISIS

The French Modernist crisis still has enigmatic aspects in the mind of every historian of Christianity. There is every likelihood that it will remain so for some years to come. The mass of literature which it provoked during the six years of its apogee from 1902 to 1908 was mostly controversial and partial. In defense of the modernists, several monographs and collections of documents were published; but as the modernists either submitted to the Roman condemnation or left the Church, their literature dwindled down. In defense of the official Roman Catholic position, every writer employed what might be called the "myth" of "Modernism," the "crossroads of all Christian heresies," as it was defined by the encyclical _Pascendi_, for it provided him with an easy target to harass any tendency of which he disapproved. Nearly a generation went by before any kind of objective and impartial study was made.

The French Modernist crisis is a complex of innumerable tendencies to adapt the patterns of thought and action of the Catholics to the conditions of the modern world. As in all periods of social change, some persons emphasize the value of antiquity, others point to the wealth of modernity, and few agree on the right balance between the two. The religious situation in France was tumultuous at the beginning of the twentieth century: the conflict between anti-clerical republicans and Catholic monarchists, the patronizing attitude of the bourgeoisie and its opposition to the social movements, the failure of the Christian democratic movement and the "affaire Dreyfus," the opposition to the papal policy of "ralliement," the rupture of diplomatic relations between France and the Holy See (1904), the separation of Church and State in France (1905), the condemnation of Modernism (1907), the condemnation of the Catholic social movement of _Le Sillon_ (1914), the long domination of _L'Action française_ until its condemnation in 1926, and so forth.

Many writers have described the process of dechristianization of the proletariate since the French Revolution and the rise of industrial society. To the contemporary French sociologists of religion, this view is in fact mythical. For Gabriel Le Bras, for example, the word "dechristianization" is fallacious. First of all, one should investigate to what extent France was ever completely christianized. In several of his studies, Christopher Dawson has pointed to many layers of paganism under a veneer of Christianity in the culture of western Europe. And Gabriel Le Bras wrote: "Le mythe de la France Chrétienne s'est formée au lendemain de la Révolution .... S'il est vrai que le taux de la pratique a baissé depuis 1789, continuellement ou par étapes, nous refusons d'y voir une preuve de la déchristianisation d'un pays qui n'a jamais été profondément chrétien."[1]

For the mass of nominal Roman Catholics in France, the Modernist crisis was a squabble in the sacristy. According to its latest historian, Emile Poulat, the French Modernist movement was reserved to scholars: "Le modernisme savant, préoccupé de critique et de réflexion, n'a guère été qu'un mouvement de 'clercs,' de professeurs, indifférent aux grands faits extérieurs, économiques ou politiques, étranger aux inquiétudes et aux recherches qui, sur des questions qui n'étaient pas les siennes, se faisaient jour à l'intérieur de l'Eglise. Dépourvu de toute assise sociale, il a été sans aboutissement ni prolongement hors de lui-même" (HDC, 14).

In the presence of the French Modernist crisis, Poulat proposed to the scholar the distinction of three problems:

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[1] Lettre au colloque d'histoire religieuse de Lyon (octobre, 1963) in Cahiers d'Histoire, 9 (1964), 95-96.

(1) the theological problem of the evolution of dogma; (2) the historical problem of the formation of doctrines; (3) the psychosociological problem of the transformation of religious beliefs (HDC, 15). Not one man, but a host of scholars need to work on such a program.

For English readers, one of the most objective accounts of the French Modernist crisis was written by Alec Vidler more than thirty years ago.[1] After a brief survey of the Roman church in the nineteenth century, Vidler discusses the position of the various modernists, with special emphasis on Loisy and Tyrrell, and concludes with the outcome of the Modernist movement. He believes that the best intentions of the French Modernist movement were realized in the Anglican Communion. Fortunately, Vidler is now preparing a new edition of his history. In his first edition, he neglected or ignored many personalities and issues, and he still shows little interest in Maurice Blondel. A brief review of "Modernism" was given recently by Norman Pittenger who succeeds Vidler at Cambridge University.[2]

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[1] The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church: Its Origins and Outcome. (Cambridge University Press, 1934).

[2] "Modernism," Theology, 68 (1965), 53-60.

Two studies in Italian are fairly useful, one by Giuseppe Martini,[1] and one by Pietro Scoppola.[2] Martini's study is interesting because he attempts to relate the notions of tradition and dogma of Moehler, Newman, and Blondel. Scoppola is a young lay historian who studied theology at the Gregorianum in Rome. He limits his study to Italy, with some references to the influence of the French modernists. His picture of the political intransigence and cultural stagnation of the Italian Catholics at the end of the nineteenth century is very dark.

Within the Roman Catholic Communion, the most comprehensive account of the French Modernist movement remains that of Jean Rivière.[3] According to Rivière, "Modernism" has already been condemned, classified and indexed in the dictionary of heresies. To those who objected that the "official Modernism" condemned by the syllabus _Lamentabili_ and the encyclical _Pascendi_ (1907) did not correspond exactly to the trends of renewal, reformation, and updating of Catholic thought and action, Rivière tried to prove how "le modernisme officiel correspond au modernisme réel" (MOD, viii). Faithful to the neoscholastic methodology, Rivière prefaces his historical inquiries with the nominal and the real definition of the "species Modernism." Admittedly, such name-tagging could be very misleading. In fact, the pamphleteers of L'Action française, condemned by Rome in 1926 under Pius XI, and given a new lease of life in 1939 under Pius XII, levelled the accusation of "Modernism" against anyone who disagreed with their totalitarian positivo-catholico-royalist tendencies.[1] Rivière claims that it would be both more scientific and more orthodox to follow the old rule, to limit oneself toti et soli definito, to "Modernism" insofar as it was condemned by the Church. Such is the formal object. The material object, however, includes more than what one might expect. Rivière does not limit "Modernism" to doctrinal matters, but extends it to literature, sociology, law, ascetics, and so forth. Moreover, besides genuine modernists, he finds semi-modernists of all shades and colors, "des modernisants, des modernistiques." There is even such an entity as "Modernism," "une sorte d'entité en soi," even though he acknowledges that historical contingencies exercise a certain control. Is this "entity" an ens reale or an ens rationis? Since the formal aspect of this heresy was determined by the ecclesiastical authority, Rivière attempts to justify historically the condemnation by searching for the corresponding material evidence:

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[1] _Cattolicesimo e storicismo: momenti d'una crisi del pensiero religioso moderno_ (Napoli: Ed. scientifiche italiane, 1951).

[2] _Crisi modernista e rinnovamento cattolico in Italia_ (Bologno: Il Mulino, 1961).

[3] _Le modernisme dans l'Eglise: Etude d'histoire religieuse contemporaine_ (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1929).

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[1] See E. Weber, Action Française: Royalism and Reaction in Twentieth Century France (London: Oxford University Press, 1963); J. de Fabrègues, Charles Maurras et son Action française (Paris: Perrin, 1966). Professor Edward Gargan of the history department of Wisconsin University is presently doing research in French private archives for a new study of L'Action française. The descendants of this movement are still very active in France today, even though they represent but a small segment of the population. On February 1, 1967, over a hundred young members of L'Action française caused a major disturbance at the opening lecture on "Violence" given under the auspices of the Semaine des intellectuels catholiques in Paris: see Le Monde of February 3, 1967. One can see numerous graffiti of L'Action française on the walls of public buildings in Paris.

> De là résulte un double principe de méthode. C'est, d'une part, qu'aucune description subjective n'est de mise là où nous sommes en possession d'un signalement officiel: y ajouter quelque chose de son cru ne serait pas suivre les enseignements de l'autorité, mais y substituer indûment ses propres conceptions. Mais c'est aussi, d'autre part, l'assurance que nous avons le moyen sûr de connaître le modernisme tel que l'Eglise l'a vu et condamné. Il suffit pour cela de s'en tenir au portrait qu'elle-même a pris soin d'en tracer (MOD, 5).

Rivière remained faithful to his methodology; he remained faithful to the official description of "Modernism," and found "historical evidence" to justify that condemnation. If he showed any partiality, it was in favor of his former school of Toulouse, in particular, in favor of Pierre Batiffol.[1]

More recently, a resurgence of "Modernism" was feared in the various movements which led to the "ressourcement" and "dépassement" favored in particular by "la Nouvelle théogie." This was the occasion for the encyclical Humani Generis in 1950.

Four years before that encyclical, on October 17, 1946, Garrigou-Lagrange wrote to Blondel a long letter in which he deplored the tendencies of "la nouvelle théologie." He attributes these tendencies to an article of Blondel in 1906.[2] Blondel suggested replacing the static definition of truth, adaequatio rei et intellectus, by a more dynamic one, adaequatio realis mentis et vitae. Garrigou-Lagrange believes that such a statement was condemned by the syllabus Lamentabili in 1907, and warns Blondel: "Et alors, cher Monsieur, je ne voudrais en rien vous peiner, mais permettez-moi de vous dire de plus en plus qu'à la racine de toutes les erreurs de la 'théologie nouvelle' il y a la définition nouvelle de la vérité que vous avez proposée en 1906, laquelle a été visée par une condamnation du Saint Office du ler décembre 1924" (MMd, 62). Garrigou-Lagrange advises Blondel to correct this "Modernist" heresy. Although eightyfive years old then, blind and half-deaf, Blondel answered the next week that he would undertake the revision of all his books with the help of two secretaries. He will take seriously Garrigou-Lagrange's observations, but he believes that he has been misunderstood. He repeats the famous quote: "In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas" (MMd, 62).

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[1] see AL, 328; AP, 109; BV, 198; CCM, 297-316.

[2] "Le point de départ de la recherche philosophique," APC, 151 (1906), 337-360; 152 (1906), 225-250.

In an article entitled "Le relativisme et l'immutabilité du dogme,"[1] Garrigou-Lagrange mentioned again Blondel's definition of truth and observed that the philosophy of Action can lead only to pragmatism and relativism in matters of doctrine. He refers to a letter of the Holy Office, signed by Cardinal Merry del Val, in response to a request of Bishop Duparc of Quimper, in which twelve propositions concerning philosophy, apologetics, and theology were examined and condemned. The goal was to condemn doctrines, rather than persons; but there is no doubt that Blondel's philosophy was the object of that censure. The text was never published in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis; but la Documentation Catholique transcribed the latin text from the Monitore ecclesiastico and gave the French translation which follows:

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[1] Angelicum, 27 (1950), 219-246.

Sur une demande qui lui avait été adressée par un écrivain étranger au diocèse, Mgr Duparc, de Quimper, avait présenté à l'examen du Saint Office certaines propositions concernant la philosophie, l'apologétique et la théologie, sans toutefois désigner à la censure les ouvrages où elles pouvaient être contenues, le but étant d'atteindre les doctrines plutôt que les personnes.

1o Les concepts ou idées abstraites ne peuvent aucunement constituer par elles-mêmes une image juste et fidèle, bien que seulement partielle, de la réalité.

2o Les raisonnements formés de ces éléments ne peuvent, par eux-mêmes, nous procurer une connaissance vraie de cette même réalité.

3o Aucune proposition abstraite ne peut être tenue pour immuablement vraie.

4o Dans l'acquisition de la vérité, l'acte intellectuel, pris en lui-même, est dépourvu de cette efficacité spécialement appréhensive; il n'est pas l'instrument propre et unique de cette acquisition et n'a de valeur que dans l'ensemble de toute l'action humaine, dont il est une partie et un moment, et à laquelle seule il appartient d'acquérir et de posséder la vérité.

5o C'est pourquoi la vérité ne se rencontre dans aucun acte particulier de l'intelligence qui serait, comme disent les scolastiques, en "conformité avec l'object," mais la vérité est toujours en devenir, et elle consiste dans l'équation progressive de l'intelligence et de la vie, c'est-à-dire dans un mouvement continu par lequel l'intelligence s'efforce de développer et d'expliquer ce que l'expérience apporte ou ce qu'exige l'action: sous cette réserve cependant que, de tout ce progrès, il n'y ait jamais rien d'acquis ou de fixe.

6o Les arguments logiques de l'existence de Dieu, de la crédibilité de la religion chrétienne, ne possèdent à eux seuls, aucune valeur objective, comme on dit, c'est-à-dire, qu'ils ne prouvent rien pour l'ordre réel.

7o Nous ne pouvons acquérir aucune vérité proprement dite sans admettre l'existence de Dieu, bien plus sans admettre la révélation.

8o La valeur que peuvent avoir de tels arguments (ceux de la proposition 6) ne provient pas de leur évidence ou de leur force dialectique, mais des exigences "subjectives" de la vie et de l'action qui, pour se développer correctement et de façon cohérente, ont besoin de ces vérités.

9o L'apologétique "extrinséciste", c'est-à-dire celle qui part de la connaissance naturelle des faits historiques relatés dans les divers saints et surtout dans l'Evangile, pour s'élever ensuite par le moyen du raisonnement, jusqu'à établir le caractère surnaturel et divin de ces mêmes faits, d'où elle conclut enfin que Dieu est l'auteur de la Révélation qu'ils garantissent--cette apologétique est une méthode sans force et puérile, qui ne répond pas aux exigences légitimes de l'esprit humain tel qu'il est aujourd'hui.

10o Le miracle pris insolément en lui-même, c'est-à-dire comme un fait sensible qui ne peut être attribué qu'à la puissance divine, abstraction faite de sa signification symbolique et des exigences subjectives de l'homme--ne fournit pas une preuve solide de la révélation.

11o La pratique religieuse légitime n'est pas le fruit de la certitude que l'homme possède de la vérité, mais au contraire le moyen unique d'obtenir la certitude de cette vérité.

12o Même après être parvenu à la foi, l'homme ne doit pas se reposer dans les dogmes de la religion et y adhérer d'une manière fixe et immobile, mais il doit toujours rester inquiet et progresser vers une vérité ultérieure, en développant selon des sens nouveaux, et même en corrigeant ce qu'il croit.

Les Eminentissimes et Révérendissimes Seigneurs Cardinaux qui sont avec moi les Inquisiteurs Généraux, après avoir pris l'avis des Consulteurs, ont décidé de répondre ce qui suit:

"Les propositions dénoncées, telles qu'elles sont, ou bien ont déjà été proscrites et condamnées en bloc par le Concile du Vatican et le Saint-Siège, ou bien fraient la voie aux dites propositions déjà proscrites et condamnées." R. Cardinal Merry del Val.[1]

On August 21, 1950, Pius XII issued the encyclical Humani Generis, a condemnation of contemporary errors and passing fashions in theology, philosophy, and science.

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[1] La Documentation Catholique, 13 (1925), 771-773; see Angelicum, 27 (1950), 234, where the reference is given to Monitore ecclesiastico, 1925, p. 194, and to the pages just quoted of La Documentation Catholique.

In theology, the pope condemns freeing dogma from the scholastic terminology so that there may be a return to the modes of expression of Scripture and the fathers of the Church. The method of St. Thomas is said to enjoy an outstanding superiority, not only in the formation of students, but also in the investigation of hidden truths; the doctrine of St. Thomas is said to be in accord with Revelation.

In the collection of commentaries on Humani Generis published by the professors of the Pontifical University for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome, Parente identified the faulty theologians criticized by the Pope, those of "la nouvelle théologie," as Chenu, Charlier, de Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Fessard, Balthazar; the faulty philosophers, as Le Roy, Laberthonnière, Blondel, Marcel; the faulty scientists, as Teilhard de Chardin and others.[1] Admittedly other commentators were more cautious in identifying the censured authors.

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[1] "Stuttura e significato storico-dottrinale dell-'Encyclica 'Humani Generis,'" In Litteras Encyclicas "Humani Generis" Pii PP. XII Commentarium (Romae: Editiones Urbanianae, 1951, pp. 23-45. For other commentaries on Humani Generis, see also: M. Labourdette, Foi catholique et problèmes modernes: Avertissements et directives du Souverain Pontife (Tournai: Desclée, 1953) and A. Dondeyne, Foi Chrétienne et pensée contemporaine: Les problèmes philosophiques soulevés dans l'encyclique "Humani Generis" (Louvain, 1951). Dondeyne is much more liberal than Labourdette.

It is now obvious that Vatican II turned a new page in Church history. The proponents of "la nouvelle théologie" and modern philosophy, those whom Garrigou-Lagrange, Parente, and other conservatives expected to repress with their comments on Humani Generis, have been vindicated and appear now as the theoreticians for the progressive wing of the Roman Catholic church.

Shortly after the condemnation of "la nouvelle théologie," with several known and unknown collaborators, Henri de'Lubac began a long series of publications as Documents sur l'histoire du modernisme.[1] A cursory glance and perusal of this huge and valuable documentation suffices to convince the reader of the major role that Blondel played in the French Modernist crisis. Unfortunately its tone is apologetic and its methodology is questionable. Great efforts are spent to show Blondel as one of the most clearsighted and prudent thinkers who foresaw the peril, discovered the remedy, and with the publication of History and Dogma, made a supreme effort to reconcile critical science with the Catholic faith in harmony with an integral Tradition. Blondel is eulogized at the expense of many others, of course, of the "modernists" such as Loisy, Hébert, Houtin, Hügel, and Tyrrell, but also of the "traditionalists" such as Schwalm, Gayraud, Turinaz, Fontaine, Barbier, even of the Toulouse school of Batiffol and Rivière. With respect to methodology, it can be demonstrated that several letters brought forth as evidence have been cut up and distributed sometimes non-chronologically in places where they would best support the opinions of the compiler. The authors claim to reproduce all the letters of incontestable historical and doctrinal value,[1] but readers using other criteria will judge that important letters are omitted. Furthermore, sections of letters and words are dropped, and sometimes sections are rephrased. This is perhaps evidence of the diplomatic skill necessary to publish this extremely valuable documentation at a time when the least expression of sympathy for so-called modernistic ideas was immediately repressed.

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[1] Correspondance Maurice Blondel--Auguste Valensin (3 vols.; Paris: Aubier, 1957-65); Au Coeur de la Crise moderniste: Le dossier inédit d'une controverse, présenté par R. Marlé (Paris: Aubier, 1960); Lettres philosophiques de Maurice Blondel (Paris: Aubier, 1961). We can add two other books compiled by Claude Tresmontant: Correspondance philosophique Maurice Blondel--Lucien Laberthonnière, présentée par C. Tresmontant (Paris: Seuil, 1961); Lucien Laberthonnière, Le réalisme chrétien précédé de Essais de philosophie religieuse, Préface de Claude Tresmontant, (Paris: Seuil, 1966). Henri de Lubac is now preparing the publication of the Correspondance Blondel-Wehrlé, while his Jesuit confrère, André Blanchet, is responsible for the publication of the Correspondance Blondel-Bremond.

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[1] see CCM, 15.

Consequently, three observations need to be made with respect to these *Documents sur l'histoire du modernisme*: (1) at the present time, it is extremely difficult to consult many of the original documents; (2) if we grant provisionally that the reproduction is "substantially" correct, there is still the problem of assembling together letters partially published in different books, or in different sections of the same book; (3) it is still possible to make use of this valuable documentation by overlooking its apologetical tone, by the use of internal and external cross references, by collateral and complementary studies, and by verification with the original documents that are accessible.

A more scientific history of "Modernism" was undertaken by Emile Poulat, a director at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and professor at the Sorbonne.[1]

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[1] See in particular, *Les "Semaines religieuses": Approche historique et bibliographique* (Paris: Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1958); A. Houtin et F. Sartiaux, *Alfred Loisy: Sa vie, son oeuvre*, Manuscrit annoté et publié avec une bibliographie Alfred Loisy et un Index bio-bibliographique par E. Poulat (Paris: Centre national de la Recherche Scientifique, 1960); *Utopie ou anticipation? Le Journal d'un prêtre d'après-demain (1902-1903), de l'Abbé Calippe* (Paris: Casterman, 1961); *Histoire, dogme et critique dans la crise moderniste* (2 vols.; Paris: Casterman, 1962-); the second volume is still in preparation; "Néo-christianisme et Modernisme autour de Paul Desjardins," in *Paul Desjardins et les Décades de Pontigny* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964), pp. 77-103; "Une enquête anticléricale de pratique religieuse en Seine et Marne (1903)," *Archives de Sociologie des Religions*, 10 (1960), 109-131; "Travaux récents

In contrast to Rivière and many other historians of the Modernist movement, Poulat adopted an empirical approach in preference to a dogmatic one. In _Histoire, dogme et critique dans la crise moderniste_, he described tendencies and texts through which men reveal themselves. He defined his limits as follows: (1) in time, to the period between Loisy's _L'Evangile et L'Eglise_ (November 1902) and the encyclical _Pascendi_ (September 1907); (2) in place, to the French phase of Modernism. Because of the abundance of material, he divided his task in two phases, that of Loisy and that of Le Roy. So far, only the first volume has been published.

Poulat centers the "cycle Loisy" around the publication of _L'Evangile et L'Eglise_ and _Autour d'un petit livre_, highlights the program of theological renewal formulated explicitly against liberal Protestantism and implicitly against Catholic traditionalism, the opposition of conservative circles, and the ecclesiastical condemnations. Poulat then focusses his attention on three main topics: (1) the critical progressivism of Hébert, Turmel, and Houtin, versus

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sur le modernisme," _Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire_, 4 (1963), 1159-1167; "La crise moderniste," _L'information historique_, 27 (1965), 110-114. In spite of ill health, Poulat is now doing research in France and Italy on "l'Intégrisme" which was partly responsible for the condemnation of Modernism.

the fideist progressivism of Batiffol; (2) the methodological debate between the critical approach of Birot and the dogmatic approach of Frémont, while archbishop Mignot proposed a reconciliation between "critique et tradition"; (3) finally, the relations between dogma and history as treated by Blondel.

Poulat pursued his research in three stages: (1) a complete survey of the accessible archives; (2) a prolonged familiarity with the main persons involved in the Modernist crisis through a careful perusal of unpublished documents and a comparison with the memoirs and biographies; (3) a review of the printed material concerning the doctrinal controversy. In his own presentation, Poulat reserved the first place to the published material as being more complete and explicit, and used the unpublished material to provide a concrete and more human context.

To begin with Pascendi's definition of Modernism, "le carrefour de toutes les hérésies," as Rivière and other dogmatic historians did, appears to Poulat an impossible task; it would mean the description of nineteen centuries of Christian divisions. He prefers to limit himself to a modern crisis within the so-called unity of Catholic thought before it became a crisis of Catholic unity (HDC, 9). As a sociologist of religion, particularly of Roman Catholicism in France, Poulat elaborated this working definition of Modernism: "La rencontre et la confrontation actuelles d'un passé religieux depuis longtemps fixé, avec un présent qui a trouvé ailleurs qu'en lui les sources vives de son inspiration" (HDC, 15). The French Modernist crisis between faith and reason, orthodoxy and criticism, official Roman Catholicism and modern science is summarized in this fashion: "Le prêtre commémore, mais l'exégète veut remémorer, et l'écart, de l'un à l'autre, s'est parfois avéré considérable, trop brutal pour être supporté par le premier. Le choc surmonté, de meilleurs rapports s'établissent entre eux" (HDC,15).

Several private archives have just been opened to scholars. Poulat listed some of them (see HDC, 33-38). At the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, it is now possible, with permission, to consult papers of Hébert, Houtin, Klein, Laberthonnière, Lacroix, Loisy, Sartiaux, and others. At the Ambrosian library in Milan, the papers of Bonomelli are available; at the Jesuit library of Chantilly, the papers of Bouvier; at the municipal library of Bar-le-Duc, the papers of Hébert; at the University of Saint Andrews library, the papers of Hügel; at the British Museum, letters and papers of Hügel, Tyrrell, and Petre. The main bulk of the archives of Blondel, kept until April 5, 1965, at Aix-en-

Provence, has been transported to Louvain where they are being microfilmed and indexed. Large collections of his letters are still kept in Paris, at the residence of his daughter, Madame Flory, or have been confided to some Jesuits who are preparing their publication. In May 1965, an important discovery was made in the diocesan archives of Albi; several hundred letters addressed to archbishop Mignot were found, among which there were twenty-nine from Hügel and sixty from Loisy. Marcel Bécamel has just published and annotated the letters of Loisy to Mignot.[1]

It will be a long time before these archives have been classified and exploited, and many others which remain inaccessible to scholars, in particular, the Roman and the various diocesan archives. No one has yet made a complete survey of the literature on the French Modernist crisis: the diocesan and local newspapers, the journals and periodicals, the pamphlets and monographs. The French Modernist crisis has not only caused a turmoil in the past; the issues raised then are still alive today. Interested scholars can now enjoy more favorable conditions to pursue their researches.

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[1] "Lettres de Loisy à Monseigneur Mignot," BLE, 67 (1966), 3-44; 81-114; 170-194; 257-286

Within the French Modernist crisis, was Blondel a "modernist" or an "integrist"? He has been described by some as a "modernist," and by others, as an "integrist." Such a classification, however, seems arbitrary. Could not a similar question be raised with respect to Pope John XXIII who inaugurated the "aggiornamento" in 1959? In the fall of 1962, the *Corriere della Sera* of Milan published a polemical article in which the ideas of John XXIII were said to derive from Ernesto Buonaiuti, an avowed modernist and a keen disciple of Blondel. In fact, the very term "aggiornamento" is frequent in Buonaiuti's writings.[1] Both John XXIII and Paul VI enjoyed the friendship of Blondel long before their elevation to the papacy. Yves Congar was well justified when he spoke of Vatican II as partly a Blondelian council.

The syllabus *Lamentabili* and the encyclical *Pascendi* present arbitrary syntheses and caricatures of tendencies which indeed deserve condemnation.[2] Most of the so-called "modernists," who seemed to be condemned by the Roman decisions, protested against a mistrial. Each made his own exegesis of the Roman documents in an effort of self-justification. Each case was different and unique. Among others, Maurice Blondel struggled all his life to overcome suspicions, prejudices, and accusations of heresies, in spite of the strong support that he received from cardinals and popes.

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[1] See W. N. Pittenger, "Ernesto Buonaiuti and Roman Catholic Modernism," *Theology*, 67 (1964), 394-401

[2] See A. Loisy, *Simples réflexions sur le Décret du Saint Office* "*Lamentabili sane exitu*" *et sur l'encyclique* "*Pascendi dominici gregis*" (Ceffonds, 1908), pp. 15 ff. Compare with *MOD*, 329-372.

In 1924, Katherine Gilbert wrote _Maurice Blondel's Philosophy of Action_,[1] after a year of research in France and personal interviews with Blondel. Gilbert summarized her judgment in this fashion: "As apologetic, the philosophy of Modernism, which is essentially the philosophy of Blondel, his master Ollé-Laprune, his friend and disciple Laberthonnière, and of Loisy and Le Roy, in France, has been popularly opposed to Neo-Thomism" (p. 3). No matter how justified such evaluation might seem at first sight, no historian could ever accept it until he has analyzed in detail the written work of each of these authors.

For a doctoral dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania in 1925, Leicester Lewis studied _The Philosophical Principles of French Modernism_.[2] After a brief survey of the historical sources, dating from John Scotus Erigena,

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[1] (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1924).

[2] (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1925).

Anselm, Abelard, and Thomas Aquinas, Lewis comes to those he considers as the four pillars of French Modernism: the psychologist Maurice Blondel, the philosopher Lucien Laberthonnière, the mathematician Edouard Le Roy, and the historian Alfred Loisy. Lewis provides the reader with concise summaries, useful reports of personal interviews with the men he is studying, but seems too eager to combine divergent tendencies.

Our purpose is much more modest: to study the historical significance of a small treatise of Maurice Blondel, _History_ _and_ _Dogma_, in the midst of the French Modernist crisis. The abundance of material related to the preparation, publication, and subsequent influence of this treatise is so great that a comprehensive history must necessarily be postponed. The present dissertation aims only to give a sound line of direction for further studies.

Wise is the historian who heeds the advice which Henri Marrou gave in reference to the book, _Au_ _Coeur_ _de_ _la_ _Crise_ _moderniste_. In this book, one reads such passages as the following: "[Loisy] pensait nécessaire de réinterpréter les dogmes--et, en fait d'arriver à leur dissolution--pour offrir à la foi catholique un nouvel abri. A la différence de Loisy, au contraire de Loisy, Blondel entendait sauvegarder les dogmes de la foi catholique intégralement, scrupuleusement"

(CCM, 11). In reference to Hügel, "ce personnage singulièrement complexe," one is told that "son rôle certes fut des plus contestables" (CCM, 13). In opposition to this simplistic approach to history, Marrou declared:

> Je voudrais vous mettre en garde contre ce qu'on peut appeler une vision manichéenne de l'histoire où il y aurait d'un côté les bons, de l'autre les mauvais, d'un côté des conservateurs aveugles et de l'autre des progressistes qui comprenaient les besoins de leur temps, ou inversement des modernistes, avoués ou ignorants d'eux-mêmes, qui mettaient l'Eglise en danger, en face de chrétiens clairvoyants parfaitement conscients de l'essentiel à sauver.[1]

During the same convention held at Bologna University in December 1960, Roger Aubert presented a paper on the various aspects of the Thomist revival. Before the Modernist crisis, Thomism enjoyed very little favor:

> "En France, le néo-kantisme a des adeptes jusque dans les rangs du clergé et le mouvement thomiste voit en outre s'opposer à lui, surtout à partir des toutes dernières années du siècle, les pascaliens et les newmaniens, les bergsoniens et tout particulièrement les partisans de la 'philosophie de l'action,' disciples de Maurice Blondel, qui opposent à l''extrinsécisme' scolastique la méthode d'immanence."[2]

The Thomist revival did not gain ground until it was favored on the one hand by the antimodernist reaction, and, on the other, by the historical studies of Grabmann, Madonnet, and Gilson.

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[1] "Philologie et histoire dans la période du pontificat de Léon XIII," in Aspetti della cultura cattolica nell'Eta di Leone XIII (Roma: Ed. di Cinque Lune, 1961), p. 88.

[2] Op. cit., p. 202.

In the eyes of the average Thomist at the beginning of this century, Blondel was definitely a "modernist"; in the eyes of several Roman Catholics in France today, Blondel was very orthodox, a liberator of the "spirit" of Thomism.[1] Such disparate interpretations of the writings of Blondel invite the historian to make a more thorough and critical investigation.

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[1] See H. Bouillard, Blondel et le Christianisme (Paris: Seuil, 1961); C. Tresmontant, Introduction à la métaphysique de Maurice Blondel (Paris: Seuil, 1963).

CHAPTER II

A SKETCH OF MAURICE BLONDEL BEFORE 1902

Maurice Blondel was born at Dijon on November 2, 1861, as the youngest of four children, in an old bourgeois family of lawyers, physicians, and civil servants. He received his secondary education at the lycée of Dijon from 1870 to 1879, majored in philosophy with Alexis Bertrand and Henri Joly as his tutors, and received his licentiate in 1880. From 1881 to 1884, he studied at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Paris. Among his fellow students were Henri Berr, Frédéric Rauh, Victor Delbos, and Pierre Duhem; among his favorite professors, Emile Boutroux and Léon Ollé-Laprune. The director of the school was successively Louis Pasteur, Fustel de Coulanges, and Georges Perrot. The predominant philosophies were those of Ravaisson and Lachelier. The skepticism of Renan and the dilettantism of the young Barrès fascinated a great number of students. Strong in his Catholic faith, Blondel proposed to be as scientific as possible. He received his "agrégation" in philosophy in 1886. From 1885 to 1889, he taught successively at the lycées of Chaumont, Montauban, and Aix-en-Provence. In 1889, he requested a leave of absence to prepare his doctorate. There was a brief substitution at the Collège Stanislas in Paris from December 1891 to April 1892. On June 7, 1893, he received his doctorate. He married Rose Royer on December 12, 1894, and had three children, Charles, Elizabeth, and André, who are still alive. In 1895, he was appointed professor of philosophy on the Faculty of Lille, and in 1896, at Aix-en-Provence. He became a widower in 1913. In 1927, he retired because of increasing blindness, but continued to dictate and publish until he died on June 4, 1949, at the age of 88.

How did Blondel come to write History and Dogma in 1904? Was it simply his answer to the Modernist crisis as focussed by the biblical question? A rapid survey of his correspondence and the events prior to 1902 will shed some light.

Already in September 1886, in a letter to Emile Boutroux, Blondel explained his own via media between what he understood to be the position of Aristotle, depreciating and subordinating action to thought, and that of Kant, exalting and separating action from thought (LP, 10). Again, in March 1887, in submitting the two subjects of his Latin and French theses to Lantoine, dean of the Sorbonne, Blondel situated his position between that of Aristotle who subordinates the will to reason, and that of Kant who

places the will above reason: "Si l'action s'éclaire à la pensée et en garantit la sincérité, à son tour elle l'éclaire et la règle ... pour bien agir, il faut bien penser; il est encore plus vrai peut-être de dire que pour bien penser, il faut bien agir. In operibus lux" (LP, 12-13). Blondel noted in his diary on February 12, 1890: "Pour compléter le péripatétisme, il n'est pas inutile d'avoir traversé l'idéalisme transcendental" (BV, 64).[1]

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[1] On March 23, 1890, he wrote again in his diary: "Le sujet absorbe en lui l'objet par la connaissance; il se l'assimile par le choisir et le vouloir; le motif devient vivant dans le sujet, devient le sujet, devient le sujet même qui le veut et l'opère. Puis, par l'opération même, le subjectif retourne dans l'objet, pour le spiritualiser; nous sommes ce que nous faisons, après avoir fait ce que nous sommes. L'objet est subjectivé, spiritualisé lui-même; c'est-à-dire que ce qui redevient objet, pour l'agent, dans l'oeuvre accomplie, a une signification, un dedans, une réalité vivante et voulante; nos oeuvres ne sont pas seulement voulues et produites, elles sont productrices et causantes à leur tour, comme nos enfants qui ne sont que par nous, et qui sont générateurs après nous-mêmes; la fécondité de l'action est une sorte d'atavisme. - Comment le sujet redevient objet pour lui-même, et substitue à la connaissance extérieure et illusoire des faits, la connaissance réfléchie et substantielle des oeuvres consommées. Le premier objectif est superficiel, et sans valeur métaphysique; le second objectif est le sujet réalisé au dehors, projeté dans l'objet auquel il confère sa réalité propre: on comprend le lien de la science avec la métaphysique, par l'action qui opère l'absolu dans le relatif et réconcilie ensemble le phénomène et l'être [The underlining in this sentence is mine]. Nous connaissons dans le phénoménal, le possible, le chimérique avant d'avoir agi. Après avoir agi, nous connaissons dans l'absolu; l'action a constitué une synthèse, non seulement elle a exprimé, comme la science, le relatif de l'extérieur dans l'absolu du sujet, mais elle a mis et projeté l'absolu du sujet agissant dans le milieu où la première connaissance préalable a permis de diriger

On June 7, 1893, Blondel debated more than four hours in his "soutenance de thèse" at the Sorbonne to prove the strictly philosophical character of L'Action (EB-1, 79-98). Without the exclusion of any hypothesis, without a prejudice against any question, he postponed carefully all ontological affirmations until he had developed the complete phenomenology of what we actually think, will, and do. He had no intention, however, to confuse such a phenomenology with a phenomenalist doctrine, but rather to develop it as a preliminary to metaphysics. Professor Séailles, who was greatly surprised when he found out that Blondel's thesis led to some theological problems, accused him of a secret and unphilosophical postulate. In response, Blondel insisted on the purely philosophical inspiration of his work, even in the treatment of religious problems. In contrast to English and German philosophers, French philosophers had abandoned to theologians the question of religion. Blondel solemnly declared that his inspiration, his methodology, and his conclusions were strictly philosophical. Since he did not try to determine the object of revelation with which theology is concerned, he limited himself to the conditions which make it possible to discern, accept, and

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l'expérimentation pratique et la création morale. Corpus spirituale, terra nova, novum coelum. (BV, 100).

assimilate the data of revelation if these should be given.

In his thesis on L'Action, Blondel raised the preliminary question: "Yes or no, does human life have a meaning, does man have a destiny? I act, but without knowing what is action, without knowing exactly who I am or even if I am." Blondel was thus concerned with the meaning of life, with the destiny of man, with what he called a criticism of life, a science of practical living. He made a philosophical reflection on human action in all its manifestations, from the purely physical to the most spiritual. He developed a complete phenonemology of human action as a preliminary to an ontology.

The thesis contains five parts: (1) is there a problem with respect to action? (2) can the solution to the problem of action be negative? (3) the phenomenon of action; (4) the necessary being of action; (5) the fulfilment of action. In the first part, Blondel proposed to answer two questions: (a) how can some people pretend that there is no moral problem? (b) why is it impossible to eliminate the problem of morality? He presents dilettantism as an illusion. In the second part, he indicates briefly what, in theory and in practice, could incline belief and desire towards nihilism as the unique and necessary conclusion of experience, science, and metaphysics. He takes the viewpoint of the nihilists, tries to strengthen their positions, until ultimately, he shows that a purely negative solution is impossible. Under the appearance of the will for nothingness, there is always the will for something better. The will necessarily wills something positive. Can it, however, be something purely phenomenal? The third part of Blondel's thesis comprises five stages in a phenomenological study of action. This is a purely objective study of action limited to its natural conditions. The first stage is a discussion of the objective conditions required to learn about the unconscious sources of action beginning with sensible intuition and proceeding to a scientific introspection. The second stage deals with the conscious elements of action, from the threshold of consciousness until the action becomes properly voluntary. In the third stage, the organic development of willed action is studied, from its initial intention to its first external manifestion. In the fourth stage, Blondel treats of the generation and development of human action, from its application to individuals until its application to social groups. Finally, in the fifth stage of the phenomenological study, Blondel deals with the fruitful union of wills and the universal extension of action. He considers the family, the country, and humanity; then, the various forms of natural morality; and finally, the inherent tendency of superstition in every human action, when man pretends to fulfill himself in his own action and to be sufficient unto himself. Once he has completed this phenomenological study, Blondel begins his ontological study.

At this point, he considers that the terms of the problem of human destiny have necessarily been established and freely acknowledged. Even though willed action is seldom developed completely, there is a certain indestructibility of the action of the will. Consequently, one is led to admit the transcendence of human action. Man is thus faced with two options: either to seek the complete fulfilment of his life in what he can reach by himself, or to expect something else, impossible for him to achieve, but necessary to fulfill his expectations. In the first alternative, man pretends to be sufficient unto himself; but this is an illusion, and a deadly one. It grants absolute value to what is relative. In the second alternative, man opens himself to a transcendental possibility, to what will be necessary and sufficient to fulfill him. The philosophical notion of the supernatural is that of something absolutely necessary to man, and yet absolutely impossible to achieve by his own means. All he can do is to be open to a possible revelation and to expect a possible Messiah.

The fifth part of L'Action deals with the fulfilment of human action and the goal of human destiny. Blondel defended the strictly philosophical character of this section.

Even though human action is not fulfilled in the natural order, but in a transcendental one, philosophy can still study the notion of the supernatural, the possibility, and the conditions according to which the reality of the supernatural could solve the problem of human destiny. Blondel makes a philosophical criticism of the notion of dogmas and revealed precepts, of the value of the literal acceptance and practice of religion, and of the relation between the knowledge, action, and being of man. In conclusion, he writes: "Même après qu'on a posé, à titre d'hypothèse nécessaire, l'ordre surnaturel comme un postulat scientifique, il faut se garder de croire qu'on en pourrait prouver la vérité réelle par le développement de ses conséquences ou par ses convenances internes. Affirmer qu'il est, cet aveu ne vient jamais de nous seuls."[1] Philosophy shows the necessity of raising the question: is it, or is it not? But philosophy, although it includes an ontology, is not by itself ontogenic, that is, it does not produce the reality of the supernatural. Only faith can verify the reality and the truth of the supernatural. Blondel, speaking no longer as a scientist, nor as a philosopher, but as a Christian gifted with faith, ends with his

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[1] L'Action (1893): Essai d'une critique de la vie et d'une science de la pratique (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950), pp. 491-492.

personal conviction: "S'il est permis d'ajouter un mot, un seul, qui dépasse le domaine de la science humaine et la compétence de la philosophie, l'unique mot capable, en face du christianisme, d'exprimer cette part, la meilleure, de la certitude qui ne peut être communiquée parce qu'elle ne surgit que de l'intimité de l'action toute personnelle, un mot qui soit lui-même une action, il faut le dire: 'C'est'."[1]

Although the word "pragmatism" does not appear in *L'Action*, Blondel used it in conversation and in his notes, as early as 1888. William James used it for the first time in 1898 in *Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results*. Charles S. Pierce adopted it only in 1902 for an article in Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*. After the Roman condemnation of "Americanism" in 1899 and numerous accusations of philosophical errors and heresies on his part, Blondel decided to abandon the use of the term "pragmatism" as a definition for his philosophy of Action. From then on, he protested against the Anglo-Saxon pragmatism and against its anti-intellectualism and immanentist empiricism.[2]

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[1] *L'Action*, p. 492.

[2] See the articles "Action" and "Pragmatisme" in *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie*, Edité par André Lalande (7e édition revue et augmentée; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956). Blondel wrote himself part of the comments for these two articles.

On June 13, 1893, with his new doctorate in philosophy, Blondel visited Liard, the director of graduate education in France and made the usual request for a chair of philosophy in some faculty. He was given a flat refusal on the grounds that, by his thesis, he had denied the proper rational autonomy of philosophy and subjected it to a pure and exclusive supernaturalism. Blondel was obliged to wait two years until he was elected to the faculty of Lille on April 30, 1895, and then to Aix, on December 28, 1896. Never once was he invited to lecture at the Sorbonne, for he never fully overcame the prejudices of its philosophers. Even today, there is hardly a reference made to his philosophy in the lycées of France. On the other hand, many contemporary theologians consider him an authority.

In a letter dated October 20, 1893 to Georges Perrot, Blondel emphasized again the philosophical character of his thesis: "J'ai tenté de faire pour la forme catholique de la pensée religieuse ce que l'Allemagne a fait, depuis longtemps, et fait toujours, pour la forme protestante dont la philosophie il est vrai était plus aisée à dégager" (*LP*, 34). Blondel declared that his thesis was exclusively philosophical in its intention, methodology, doctrine, and conclusion. He made a brief historical sketch: (1) scholasticism *superimposed* faith on reason; (2) Protestantism *juxtaposed* them; (3) consequently, modern thought has been caught in the alternative of choosing between fideism and rationalism; (4) Blondel thought he had found in action the point of perpetual junction between faith and science. In other words, the "philosophy of action" was conceived as a reconciliation between faith and science, respectful of both the heteronomy of orthodoxy and the autonomy of science.[1]

Léon Brunschvicg stated in his criticism of L'Action that the notion of immanence is the root and very condition of all modern philosophy.[2] He accused Blondel of being unfaithful to modern rationalism and of concluding to the literal acceptance and practice of Catholicism. Brunschvicg assured Blondel that in spite of his sincerity and his subtle dialectics he would find in the defenders of the rights of reason some courteous but resolute adversaries.

Blondel protested against Brunschvicg's accusation in a letter to Xavier Léon, co-founder of the Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale. In his thesis, he claims that he neither abandoned the method of immanence essential to modern rationalism, nor affirmed the truth and absolute value of religious practice. He proposed only the following hypothesis:

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[1] See L, 147-149.

[2] RMM, 1 (Novembre 1893), supplément, 1; reproduced in EB-1, 99. During the last war, Brunschvicg, as well as the family of Bergson, were helped by Blondel to escape antisemitic pursuits.

> Vraies ou fausses, possibles ou non, réelles ou non, les conceptions religieuses et les formes si arrêtées et si précises de la conscience d'un catholique sont des phénomènes positifs. Et il m'a paru important (ce qui n'a jamais été fait à ce point de vue) d'en considérer la genèse dans les esprits où ils apparaissent et où ils supportent la critique rationnelle. J'ai donc tâché de ressaisir, le plus profondément possible le lien naturel de nécessité qui les rattache au déterminisme total des idées et des sentiments, sans en affirmer la vérité intrinsèque. Cette étude de la "théergie" est encore scientifique, parce qu'elle reste un phénomène pur.[1]

Blondel accepted the challenge of rationalists. He hoped to fill a great gap in French philosophy, at the risk of displeasing both the philosophers and theologians. As it turned out, he received less opposition from philosophers, and more from the theologians of the turn of the century. In his response to Brunschvicg, he repeated practically everything he had written to Georges Perrot.[2] L'Action, he wrote, was meant to introduce rationalism even in the study of revealed religion which it seemed to exclude and from which it seemed to be excluded. Action is the point of perpetual exchange between faith and science. In action, the two orders of the supernatural and the natural, of faith and reason which the scholastics superimposed, which the Protestants juxtaposed, which the fideists and the rationalists opposed, in fact cohere and interpenetrate. Blondel wanted in no way to be unfaithful to modern rationalism which sees in the method of immanence the very condition of all philosophy: that was his point of departure, his method, and the spirit of his conclusion. Not reaction to, nor a simple transposition, but a new extension of that very rationalism was his aim.[1] In developing the integral phenomenology of what we think, will, and do, Blondel discovered that man does not find in himself, nor in nature the satisfaction of all his desires. To explain this sense of incompleteness, he proposed the hypothesis of a need for the supernatural. His study of the supernatural was limited to its phenomenological aspect, insofar as it becomes embodied in human thought and action: "Formellement identique à la foi objective [i.e. the grace of Christian faith] la foi subjective [i.e. the human embodiement and expression of Christian faith] est tout entière livrée à la critique rationnelle, sans que la première puisse être atteinnte dans son fond."[1] However supernatural a religion might be, if it is to affect and transform man, it must "become flesh" in some fashion, it must reveal itself in phenomena which, as such, can be subject to scientific study. A purely phenomenological study of religion is not committed to any a priori ontology: "C'est dans la pratique effective, non dans la science de la pratique, que tout se tranche" (EB-1, 103). More exactly, the philosophy of action dans la philosophie de l'Action. In conclusion to this debate Bouillard declared that with some reservations he could agree with Duméry: "J'admets effectivement l'essentiel de son exégèse, en particulier les distinctions capitales qu'il a si bien mises en relief. Je lui reproche simplement d'avoir simplifié et édulcoré la pensée blondélienne en ce qui concerne le rapport de la philosophie au christianisme" (see RSR, 52 (1964), 599-600). The difference between Bouillard and Duméry is that Bouillard is primarily a theologian while Duméry is primarily a philosopher. In 1949, Bouillard's first article on Blondel, "L'intention fondamentale de Maurice Blondel et la théologie" (RSR, 36 (1949), 321-402), excluded everything of the philosophy of Blondel which could not directly be of concern to theologians. He concluded that Blondel's system is neither pure philosophy, nor theology in the strict sense of the word, but intellectus quaerens fidem ... fides quaerens intellectum. Bouillard teaches fundamental theology at the Institut Catholique of Paris, while Duméry teaches philosophy at the Sorbonne. Duméry's interpretation of Blondel--in my mind, one of the best to date--has been viewed with suspicion by the ecclesiastical authorities. On June 4, 1958, four of Duméry's books on the philosophy of religion--an extension of Blondel's own philosophy combined with the phenomenology of Husserl and the methodology for the study of comparative religion--were placed on the Index. This condemnation was approved by Pius XII on June 12 and published in the Osservatore Romano with this comment in the French edition: "L'auteur est intégralement moderniste au sens où l'encyclique Pascendi entendait ce terme. La foi et les dogmes ne peuvent plus présenter les caractères de certitude et de précision objectifs que leur reconnaissent dans la ligne même de la tradition catholique, le serment antimoderniste et l'encyclique Humani Generis de 1950." It seems possible that Blondel, a prestigious personality in certain ecclesiastical circles, could not be condemned personally; but he was attacked through some of his most faithful disciples, as Laberthonnière and Duméry. In spite of his declaration of orthodoxy, Duméry remains suspect in Roman Catholic circles, while Bouillard's book, which attempts a compromise between the philosophy of action and scholastic philosophy, is being translated in several languages. On the controversy between Bouillard and Duméry, see in particular: H. Duméry, La philosophie de l'Action (Paris: Montaigne, 1948); Blondel et la Religion (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954); H. Bouillard, Blondel et le Christianisme (Paris: Seuil, 1961); H. Duméry, Raison et Religion dans la Philosophie de l'Action (Paris: Seuil, 1963); and "Blondel et ses can study the phenomenological, and even the ontological aspects of revealed religion; but it is not by itself ontogenic, that is, it does not produce the supernatural. Such "realization," such ontogenesis, depends on the gift of revelation and the response of faith. Philosophical speculation deals with the notion of the supernatural; religious practice deals with its reality.[1]

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[1] LP, 38-39. Father J. P. Deconchy made substantially the same response in his "soutenance de thèse" at the Sorbonne, on January 27, 1967, for his doctoral dissertation on "La structure génétique de l'idée de Dieu chez des adolescents catéchisés français."

[2] Compare LP, 32-37 with EB-1, 100-104.

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[1] See L, 151-152

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[1] EB-1, 103. - This concise summary of Blondel's philosophy of religion was repeated in several of his works. See L, 158. It was one of the key passages used by Henry Duméry to disprove Henri Bouillard's hypothesis that Blondel had spoken only of "un surnaturel indéterminé." In the first part of his Letter on Apologetics, Blondel criticized several traditional methods, in particular, the philosophical insufficiency of apologetics based on the moral and intellectual fittingness of Christianity: "This sort of apologetics considers the supernatural at the outset from the point of view of the natural.... In short, the very notion of the supernatural remains vague and ambiguous" (L, 137-138). Blondel rejected such a pseudo-philosophical apologetics because it either ceases to be apologetics, or ceases to be philosophical (L, 138). Blondel rejected also the Thomist apologetics as inconsistent from the standpoint of philosophy. In spite of these rejections, Bouillard attempts a reconciliation of Blondel's philosophy with all the forms of traditional apologetics. Blondel went on to say that "Christian philosophy does not exist any more than Christian physics: philosophy, that is to say, is applicable to Christianity in so far as Christianity exercises, in the last analysis, control and judgment even over men who are ignorant of it or reject it" (L, 165). Consequently, philosophy must be completely autonomous and "will serve all the better the cause for which some would make it unduly responsible by not turning itself into an apologia" (L, 168). With this clarification, it would seem that Bouillard's main thesis developed in Blondel et le Christianisme was refuted by Duméry in Raison et Religion

In a letter to Albert Bazaillas on March 15, 1894, Blondel indicated where he differed from the former in his use of critical idealism: "Je ne reste pas en-deçà de l'idéalisme criticiste; je l'accepte afin d'aller au-delà, en supprimant, pour ne point gêner ma recherche et pour ne point lui conférer illégitimement un caractère ontologique, toute question ultérieure à la détermination des faits tels

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interprètes," in RSR, 52 (1964), 597-600.

[1] See L, 158-159. When he was writing L'Action, Blondel met Reginald Beaudouin, o.p. in Dijon, submitted to him the galley-proofs, and was approved for his treatment of the notion of the supernatural. Beaudouin became subsequently the assistant of the Master general of the Dominicans in Rome and a consultant to the Sacred Congregation for Ecclesiastical Studies. Blondel complained to Beaudouin that he was being challenged by philosophers for having introduced the notion of the supernatural, and by theologians who feared that he would "rationalize" the reality of the supernatural. Beaudouin tried to persuade some of the Dominican theologians to minimize their opposition to the philosophy of L'Action. He has also requested the cancellation of a favorable article on that philosophy for fear that the philosophers of the Sorbonne might consider the neoscholastics as supporters of Blondel (BV, 312).

qu'ils sont enchainés dans le déploiement concret de notre pensée et de notre vie" (LP, 40-41). Before tackling the metaphysical question, Blondel wished to develop a complete phenomenology. Moreover, he did not expect to solve the problem of human destiny by speculation alone: "Il m'a paru que le proton pseudos, aussi bien de la métaphysique dogmatique que de l'idéalisme critique et de l'Ethique spinoziste ou hégélienne, c'était de considérer soit la vérité connue, soit l'intention formelle comme la solution suffisante de ce problème de la vie, sans réserver à la vie même ce qu'elle apporte d'incommunicable enseignement" (LP, 52). Speculation without action is incomplete; if it pretends to be exhaustive in its abstraction, it is false: "Je crois que toute philosophie qui prétendra se suffire en tant que philosophie est nécessairement fausse ou du moins incomplète, et que le rôle véritable de la spéculation c'est de respecter l'originalité irréductible de l'action, sous peine de se condamner à expliquer l'inexplicable, et à se suffire, tandis qu'elle est forcée d'avouer son insuffisance" (LP, 52).

On August 7, 1894, Blondel described in his diary how he conceived his vocation:

> J'ai comme tout homme, un rôle, une mission à remplir, une vocation. Et je me sens de plus en plus porté au dessein de montrer, par la pensée comme dans ma vie, la nécessité naturelle du surnaturel et la réalité surnaturelle du naturel même. J'admire avec effroi d'amour et

> d'envie ces âmes qui vivent de foi, de sacrifice, d'immolation, comme une follie divine et un scandale; sans doute il faut être comme cela, on n'est pas chrétien sans cette mort; là pourtant n'est point, il me semble, mon don le plus apparent ni mon oeuvre particulière. *J'ai à tracer les voies actuelles de la raison vers Dieu incarné et crucifié; j'ai à ménager les prétentions de la pensée moderne; j'ai à acheminer la science et la philosophie*, *par les méthodes mêmes qui leur sont chères et qu'elles ont raison d'aimer*; j'ai à rester naturel aussi et plus longtemps que quiconque, afin de manifester plus uniment, plus péremptoirement, plus pacifiquement, plus largement, plus impérieusement, *le besoin inévitable du surnaturel*. Combien peu sont disposés à suivre ces routes laborieuses, à ouvrir, parmi tant d'obstacles, ce chemin scientifique, à *comprendre également les exigences légitimes de l'esprit moderne et les intransigeances redoutables de la vérité chrétienne*, à parcourir tout l'entre-deux, et à jeter dans cet abîme, pour servir à le combler, sa vie, son coeur, sa pensée, sa raison, sa foi, son avenir dans le temps et dans l'éternité, tout soi-même? Il faut donc m'y consacrer. Il le faut (*CI*-1, 525-526); [the underlining is mine].

This page of his diary foreshadowed his long years of struggle in the no-man's-land between philosophy and theology, between a critical study of religion and orthodox Christianity, between the modern and the scholastic frame of reference. *Personally*, as a stanch Roman Catholic, Blondel was eager to make an apology for his faith; *professionally*, as a university professor of philosophy, he favored the autonomy of philosophy, even in the critical study of religion, though he never dissociated philosophy from life.

On December 12, 1894, after a long spiritual retreat to choose between a vocation to the priesthood and that of a lay philosopher in a secular university, after a month of engagement, Blondel married Rose Royer. Previous to his marriage, he travelled extensively throughout northern Europe. Now, the honeymoon took them to southern Europe where they remained for several months. Blondel's wealth allowed him this leisure. In fact, his last teaching appointment had been at the lycée of Aix in 1889 when he asked for a leave of absence to write his doctoral dissertation. It was not until 1895 that he was given a new teaching appointment at Lille, thanks to the intervention of his former professor, Emile Boutroux, cousin of Raymond Poincaré, the new minister of graduate education in France.

While the young couple were in Rome, they were received by Leo XIII on February 3, 1895. A meeting with the baron von Hügel was the beginning of a long, and sometimes troubled friendship. Blondel managed to take in a few lectures on theology: some at the Gregorianum by Bernard Gaudeau, S.J. (an opponent of the Catholics influenced by democracy, laicism, and Kantianism); some at the Minerva by Alberto Lepidi, O.P. (a consultant to the Congregation of the Holy Office and the Index) (See BL, 89). He found himself estranged upon hearing such a "triumphant exposition." Laberthonnière, who received his confidence, sympathized with him; he was aware of the great renewal in all the fields of science which the Roman theologians seemed to ignore: "Aussi, il faut bien l'avouer,

la théologie est morte à l'heure actuelle. J'ai eu ce sentiment dès mon entrée au grand séminaire; et je suis allé déplorant toujours de plus en plus qu'il n'y eut personne pour la faire revivre.... Votre livre [L'Action] m'est apparue comme une introduction à une théologie vivante, comme elle peut vivre à notre époque."[1]

In March 1895, Charles Denis took over the direction of the Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne.[2] In an article entitled "Nouvelles tendances de l'apologétique philosophique: MM. Ollé-Laprune, Fonsegrive, Blondel," Denis reduced the philosophical endeavor of Blondel to a psychological apologetics of Christianity.[3] Blondel objected to this distortion of his philosophy. For the sake of clarification, he offered to Denis a series of "letters" to be published in the Annales. He insisted on the purely philosophical character of L'Action: "La philosophie apologétique, dans l'intérèt même des conclusions qu'elle prépare ou permet, ne doit pas devenir une apologétique philosophique: n'est philosophique, à vrai dire, rien de ce qui est simplement un instrument ou un moyen."[1] In six more letters published in the _Annales_,[2] Blondel tried to make an honest philosophical examination of the religious problem in such a way as to meet the ultimatum of reason and the expectations of modern man.

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[1] BL, 90-91. - Already, on August 18, 1881, Duchesne expressed the same idea to Loisy: "La théologie comme telle, est finie; la vieille exégèse s'en va" (MEM-1, 98). See also BV, 197.

[2] Founded in 1829 by Augustin Bonnetty, the Annales were sold secretly in 1905 to Blondel who confided the public direction of them to Lucien Laberthonnière.

[3] APC, 130 (1895), 652-656.

It is not our purpose here to make a detailed analysis of this famous _Letter on Apologetics_. Some brief observations should suffice. The _Letter_ was written primarily as an apology for the philosophical character of _L'Action_ and the method of immanence. It comprises three sections: (1) the criticism and repudiation of the various traditional apologetical methods because they are inconsistent from the standpoint of modern philosophy; (2) the really philosophical point in the religious problem and the right method of approaching it; (3) the mutual renewal of philosophical and religious perspectives by a fully consistent development of modern thought.

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[1] _Les Premiers Ecrits de Maurice Blondel_ (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), p. 3.

[2] In January, February, March, May, June, and July 1896. Soon after these articles were compiled in a booklet limited to private distribution and entitled _Lettre sur les exigences de la pensée contemporaine en matière d'apologétique et sur la méthode de la philosophie dans l'étude du problème religieux_ (Saint-Dizier: Thevenot, 1896). This study was reproduced in _Les Premiers Ecrits de Maurice Blondel_ (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), pp. 5-95, and translated by Illtyd Trethowan in _The Letter on Apologetics and History and Dogma_ (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965).

The real problem for Blondel was the incapacity of the neo-scholastic revival to come to an understanding of the requirements of contemporary thought since it regarded as a nullity the six centuries of speculation after the "golden thirteenth." Consequently, thought Blondel, unless one took seriously modern critical philosophy, Christianity would have no impact on the contemporary man. In sum, it was essential that Catholic thought be transposed from the scholastic to the modern critical frame of thought.

When the first article of the Letter on Apologetics appeared in the Annales, Laberthonnière told Blondel of his agreement on the actual non-existence of a Christian philosophy. Attacked by scientists and critical historians, Catholics offered resistance; but in the last two centuries, according to Laberthonnière, they have trailed their adversaries. In the last twenty years of the nineteenth century , they expected a panacea by a return to the scholastic philosophy, with no regard for modern critical philosophy (BL, 94).

The second article stirred Schwalm to write an article in La Revue Thomiste.[1] The Dominican writer declared his shock at finding a Catholic rejecting the Thomist philosophy: "Comment des catholiques peuvent-ils avancer que le thomisme ne peut s'adapter aux 'exigences rationnelles de la pensée moderne en matière d'apologétique'? ... Il est souhaitable qu'un homme du talent de M. Blondel s'initie mieux au thomisme, et, en attendant ne condamne plus en bloc sa méthode apologétique."[1]

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[1] "L'acte de foi est-il raisonnable?" RT, 4 (1896), 36-63.

The third article of the Letter seemed to be a summary of L'Action to Laberthonnière (BL, 95). Blondel answered on April 8, that he had been accused by Schwalm, not only of philosophical error, but also of heresy (BL, 97).

When he read the first four articles, Hügel wrote to Blondel on May 26, 1896. As evidence of his enthusiasm, he wants to add a photograph of Blondel to his collection of favorite authors along with those of Newman, Eucken, Loisy, Duchesne, Smedt, and Semeria. He approves Blondel's criticism of the scholastic philosophy, this "iceberg floating in a southern sea": "Si la scolastique me ruine la philosophie, elle m'est aussi l'implacable ennemie sur le terrain historique et biblique. Nulle connaissance réelle des stages passés de la pensée humaine, même (peut-être surtout) de la pensée religieuse, sans les trois éléments du relatif, du développement, du moralisme. Or ces trois éléments manquent, au fond, complètement à la scolastique: elle cesserait d'être le jour où elle les accepterait en leur vraie étendue" (HDC, 534). The baron does not overlook what he considers are weaknesses in Blondel himself: neo-platonic tendencies and semi-Jansenism (HDC, 536). In a private correspondence with Blondel, Schwalm felt duty-bound to warn him: (1) the Letter on Apologetics contradicts the teaching of the Magisterium, in particular the encyclical Aeterni Patris of Leo XIII, of August 4, 1879; (2) Blondel is not sufficiently acquainted with Thomism to criticize it properly; (3) there is an inconsistency in affirming divine facts and criticizing the historical apologetics which treats of them; (4) Blondel's criticisms of traditional apologetics as not being up-to-date would lead to an endless process of restructuring; (5) such an anti-Thomist as Blondel has deprived himself of his right of self-defense. In response on August 21, 1896, Blondel declared: (1) Leo XIII had no intention of binding the Catholics exclusively to Thomism; (2) even if he is no expert in Thomism, Blondel knows it sufficiently to realize that the contemporary man prefers to it the method of immanence of critical philosophy; historical apologetics should still be valid when it has improved its methodology; its reliance on Thomistic principles is no guarantee for its value for none of these principles are humanly incontestable; (4) the problem with traditional apologetics is that it is not sufficiently and properly rational; (5) it is quite possible to love theological speculation while disapproving the hybrid alliance of revelation with the peripatetic philosophy. Is not the true Catholic spirit one which is open to all the needs of man and is not prisoner of any immutable system?[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 56, footnote 1; see also BL, 97.

On August 24, Beaudouin thanked Blondel for having sent him an offprint of his Letter on Apologetics, but confessed that a theologian could never accept his philosophical treatment of the religious problem. In response on September 3, Blondel declared:

> En distant que, restreintes au déterminisme des phénomènes qui se produisent inévitablement en nous, par le développement de notre propre vouloir, par l'effet de notre action, par le progrès de la vie et grâce aux touches

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[1] These two letters remain unpublished in AB. Raymond Saint-Jean summarized them in AP, 59, and added this footnote: "Les cardinaux Léger et Doepfner, dans la séance du lundi 16 novembre 1964 de Vatican II, tenaient un langage analogue: 'Le terme de philosophia perennis est ambigu. A quoi d'ailleurs s'applique-t-il puisqu'il y a plusieurs philosophies scolastiques profondément différentes les unes des autres? Il est dans la nature de la philosophie de procéder non à partir de l'autorité, mais à partir de la recherche sur le réel. - Il est évident pour tous que si le Concile imposait l'enseignement de la philosophie scolastique, cela n'irait pas sans de graves inconvénients pour les pays non occidentaux. Au reste ce n'est pas le rôle d'un Concile d'imposer une philosophie particulière. - Malheur à l'homme d'un seul livre! Malheur aussi à l'Eglise d'un seul Docteur! Plutôt que d'imposer saint Thomas, qu'on en fasse le prototype du chercheur et qu'on le propose comme un maître et un modèle, celui qui a su mettre la science de son temps au service de l'Eglise." See also the speech of Paul VI at the occasion of the Thomist congress of 1965. Such statements, taken for granted in recent years, seemed to be heretical some sixty years ago.

> secrètes de Dieu dans l'âme, les conclusions philosophiques sont nécessitantes et apodictiques, j'ai cru simplement dire que l'ergo erravimus des damnés est la suite de prémisses dont nous sommes déjà en possession; sinon comment pourrait-on dire que cette erreur est légitime ita ut sint inexcusabiles. Il faut, ce semble, qu'il y ait dans le problème de notre destinée, des données assez précises pour qu'on puisse formuler, au moins sous forme d'exigences, certaines des conditions ou certains des défauts de la solution ou des solutions possibles. Est-ce que dans ces termes, la théologie refuse d'accepter l'idée que j'ai chercher à justifier?"[1]

After his private correspondence with Blondel, Schwalm believed that he had sufficient evidence to attack in public.[2] He presents Blondel as a neo-Kantian who extends the Kantian methodology to its last phenomenalist consequences. The enemies of true faith are listed as Renouvier, Lachelier, Boutroux, and Blondel, all lumped together as post-Kantian philosophers, and responsible for spreading in France the evils caused in Germany twenty-five years earlier. The university students in France are fascinated by this new trend and prefer the Summa of Koenigsberg to the Summa of St. Thomas. Blondel has accepted the method of immanence. Schwalm asks: "What does it consist of?" In the determinism of the internal phenomena of conception, truth is the system of our ideas unfolding themselves. In order to avoid the idealism of thought, Blondel has in vain proposed the realism of action. He failed exactly where Kant failed. His determinism of action is no more, no less an arbitrary expedient as the categorical imperative. It would be preferable if Blondel came back to the scholastic realism. Although still unpopular in 1896, Schwalm predicted that by 1916 the scholastic philosophy would triumph over critical philosophy. Furthermore, Blondel's system is not only weakened by philosophical errors; it is replete with heresies: "La méthode d'immanence enlève d'abord toute communication certaine et réelle de la raison spéculative du croyant avec l'Eglise enseignante qui est la règle extérieure, visible et certaine, de sa foi intime" (p. 429). Since revelation is communicated to man in the form of an external testimony, consequently faith, just like science, comes to man through the perception of our senses: "La science observe, elle regarde, elle palpe, elle use de tous nos sens; la foi a son sens particulier, elle écoute la parole du Maître. _Fides ex auditu_, dit saint Paul. Saint Thomas ajoute, heureusement inspiré d'Aristote: _Auditus est sensus disciplinae_. C'est donc le dynamisme essentiel de la raison qui exige le témoignage objectif et sensible des vérités de la foi" (p. 430). As a neo-Kantian, Blondel would be unable to affirm the reality of the Church, since pure reason is incapable of knowing concrete existence and real beings.

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[1] Both letters remain unpublished in AB.

[2] "Les illusions de l'idéalisme et leur danger pour la foi," RT, 4 (1896), 413-441.

Consequently, continued Schwalm, the supernatural facts, although genuine positive facts, are unknowable in Blondel's system. Did he not declare: "There is nothing more in a miracle, if one thinks it out fully, than in the most ordinary events." Blondel wrote also: "But equally there is nothing less in the most ordinary than in a miracle" (L, 135). The Church, continued Schwalm, has proclaimed that miracles are historical and social facts, equally verifiable in the past as in the present. While Blondel explained to what extent the Christian supernatural appears to be inaccessible, impractical, and odious in the eyes of the contemporary unbeliever, Schwalm attributes to Blondel himself this fear of the heteronomy of revelation. How is it possible then to reconcile Blondel's philosophy with the teaching of the Vatican council of 1870 which declared that miracles are *signa certissima et omnium intelligentiae accommodata?* For Blondel, the "miracles are truly miraculous only for those who are already prepared to recognize the divine action in the most usual events" (L, 135). The philosophy of Blondel is thus incompatible with Catholic orthodoxy: "Son étude fourmille de propositions hérétiques, erronées, ou téméraires" (p. 440; see AP, 55-58).

After such accusations, Blondel became thoroughly defensive. He informed Laberthonnière that certain Thomists would like to have him placed on the Index (BL, 102). The attack of Schwalm was so painful that he made a pilgrimage to Lourdes. It was painful because it was replete with misunderstandings. From now on, Blondel will declare to anyone who wants to listen what he wrote to Laberthonnière:

> Je ne suis ni 'néokantien,' ni 'subjectiviste, 'ni 'fidéiste,' ni 'phénoméniste,' comme on le prétend. Et, s'il est vrai que les contraires sont des espèces d'un même genre, le thomisme est plus rapproché du kantisme que je n'en suis moi-même. C'est jouer sur les mots que de m'attribuer ce phénoménisme d'après lequel la pensée, étant tout, n'atteindrait rien en dehors d'elle ou en elle, tandis qu'à mon sens la pensée, étant quelque chose, n'est pas tout; de telle sorte que la représentation intellectuelle ne supplée ou n'égale pas le réel (BL, 103-105).

Blondel then pressed Laberthonnière to come to the defense of his method, to declare as a theologian that orthodoxy is not bound to the dogmatic philosophy of the scholastics. Laberthonnière was only too ready to undertake this assignment.[1]

In his response to Schwalm, Blondel did not mince his words. He attributed the source of their misunderstandings to the fact that scholastics extend the certitude of dogma to rational explanations and the absolutism of theology to philosophy. Consequently, anyone who denies a scholastic principle is accused of ignorance, lack of intelligence, negligence, or insincerity. Schwalm tends to attribute to scholastic philosophy an infallibility which does not even belong to theology. Is it not possible to argue against St. Thomas who rejected the Immaculate Conception specifically for theological reasons? A literal devotion to Thomism, observes Blondel, is certainly contrary to the interest of the scholastic revival. Furthermore, Schwalm misunderstands the nature of philosophy which gains by the constant criticism, renewal, and deepening of all of its principles. Schwalm would compromise theology by certain sectarian opinions and unjust condemnations. Anyone who dares to deny a principle of Thomism is accused of heresy by those who usurp the Magisterium of the Church. In sympathy with other modern philosophers, Blondel recalls to Schwalm a similar reaction of Descartes against the scholastics: "Ante omnia haec Scholastica exterminanda est; hinc enim adsueverunt Theologi adversariis omnia affingere et calumniari, ut calumniandi artem plane sibi familiarem reddiderunt, et vix aliter quam calumniari etiam inadvertentes possint." And Blondel adds: "Une calomnie, oui, c'en est une que de transformer des divergences philosophiques, qui sont légitimes, en griefs d'orthodoxie ... au lieu d'ériger en dogme nos théories et de tendre à diviniser tous les pauvres étais humains de notre foi, il me semble meilleur de déterminer cela seulement qui est de foi, et de *séparer très scrupuleusement le dogme même de ce qui est explication*, *induction*, *analogie*, *travail de la raison*" (*LP*, 95-99; the underlining is mine).

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[1] If we could anticipate here for a moment, we could mention that Laberthonnière published in 1903 Essais de philosophie religieuse, and in 1904, Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec. Both books were highly praised by Blondel; in the margins of the galley-proofs for the second book, one can read the observations of Blondel and innumerable "très bien." Both books were placed on the Index in 1906. The main reason for this condemnation was the criticism levied against the scholastic philosophy with preference given to modern critical philosophy.

In an article entitled "Une nouvelle apologétique chrétienne,"[1] Hyppolite Gayraud granted to Blondel that traditional apologetics is not sufficiently philosophical if one thinks only in terms of modern philosophy. But if one returns to Thomism, one should discover the solution to all the modern problems. Furthermore, Blondel's treatment of the supernatural can be nothing else but a reduction to naturalism. Every week now, Blondel could find a new article accusing him of some heresy. In a letter to Hügel, he came back to the accusations of Schwalm:

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[1] *APC*, 132 (1896), 257-273; 400-409. In a letter to Denis, on September 18, 1896, Gayraud wrote: "Je n'ai pu voir dans le laborieux effort de M. Blondel qu'une tentative *vaine et dangereuse*. C'est mon excellent ami le P. Bulliot [S.J., director of *Les Etudes*] qui m'a fort engagé à écrire contre M. Blondel." In another letter on September 27: "Comment un Kantien peut-il être chrétien?" And, on November 3: "M. Blondel se plaint qu'on le qualifie de Kantien ou NéoKantien. Pourquoi pas, puisque sa philosophie procède sans doute de la théorie Kantienne, encore qu'elle cherche à la dépasser?" Copies of these letters are found in *AB*.

> Pour le P. Schwalm, c'est un article de foi que de dire que la connaissance est le substitut adéquat et le décalque pur et simple des choses même matérielles. Est kantien, c'est-à-dire hérétique, tout ce qui depuis saint Thomas n'a pas été thomiste. Il est défendu de considérer la connaissance comme une donnée médiate, comme un extrait de la vie et de l'action. Et c'est ce dogmatisme qu'on nous impose comme la seule forme authentique de l'orthodoxie (HDC, 535).

Any derogation to Thomism appears to certain watchdogs of orthodoxy as Kantian, therefore Protestant, therefore heresy. Hügel knew all too well the conservative milieux to have any illusions. In response to Blondel, on November 1, 1896, he wrote:

> Vos adversaires dominent trop toutes les formes de pensée, de concevoir, de la très grande majorité des nôtres depuis six cents ans, pour qu'une attitude comme la vôtre n'ait pas grande difficulté à se faire tolérer. Et cependant, quel service vous auriez rendu à l'Eglise si vous parvenez à vous faire tolérer! Et j'espère qu'avec beaucoup de douceur et de tolérance, beaucoup de ménagements et de silence, vous finirez par vous faire pardonner de voir plus clair, plus large, et plus loin que les autres (HDC, 536).

Blondel inquired from his theological advisor in Rome what he should do in the event of a condemnation by the Index. Beaudouin answered on October 29:

> Voici la filière suivie à l'Index. Dénonciation et envoi du livre au secrétaire, le P. Cicognani,--aussitôt commence le secret le plus absolu; discussion préliminaire des consulteurs, rapport d'un consulteur, ensuite des cardinaux, et enfin signature du Pape. Défendez-vous par quelques éclaircissements et, si vous êtes déféré ou dénoncé, faites-le moi savoir, je vous indiquerai la marche à suivre pour tâcher de parer le coup. Dieu veuille que vos craintes ne soient pas fondées. N'écrivez rien sur ces matières fort délicates sans avoir pris conseil d'un bon théologien

> et philosophe. Le P. Lacôme qui est à Lille cache beaucoup de bonté sous un dehors un peu brusque; il a du savoir; c'est un ami du P. Schwalm; et si vous pouvez le voir, il éclaircira certains points (BV, 312, except last three lines still unpublished in AB).

Blondel was wondering if he would ever reconcile himself with theologians. Following the advice of Beaudouin, he arranged for an interview with Lacôme on January 10, 1897. He recorded the conversation in his diary:

> L.: Point de discussion possible entre vous et nous. Nous sommes dans le vrai absolu, vous êtes dans le faux absolu; l'erreur des modernes est si totale qu'il n'y a pas un point par où l'on puisse reprendre contact ni renouer le fil de la discussion. Ce qu'il y a à faire pour vous, modernes, c'est de vous remettre ab ovo à notre école.
>
> B.: Mais ne peut-on avoir plus de condescendance pour nos frères séparés ou égarés? La charité n'exige-t-elle pas plus?
>
> L.: La vérité d'abord. Point de charité, sans cela. Et c'est pour cela que, comme mes pères, je suis inquisiteur; dans l'ordre social, je ne puis tolérer le mal, le faux.
>
> B.: Vous êtes absolument certain de tenir la vérité assez entièrement pour que les autres ne puissent en voir un aspect qui vous échappe?
>
> L.: J'ai derrière moi l'Eglise. L'Eglise, c'est ma doctrine; je suis fondé sur tous ses conseils, toutes les déclarations des souverains; qu'on ne croie pas que c'est parce que Léon XIII est thomiste que cette philosophie est en vogue; c'est la papauté qui recommande toujours non pas une forme générale de doctrine, mais une philosophie, telle philosophie. La liaison est indissoluble de l'Eglise au Thomisme, comme de la théologie à la philosophie dans le Thomisme. Je vous le déclare, vous ne ferez pas, tous tant que vous êtes, dévier d'une ligne l'orientation de la philosophie catholique; nous sommes la barre de fer, ce qui n'exclut pas la largeur d'esprit--mais nous n'avons pas besoin de comprendre, de discuter, d'entrer en composition, de pénétrer les doctrines qui ne cadrent pas avec la nôtre; nous les toisons à notre étalon, et c'est fait.

B.: Mais enfin, n'y a-t-il pas moyen de partir en commun au moins d'un point, comme de celui-ci par exemple: que nous ne sommes immédiatement conscients que de nos états de conscience?

L.: Non, c'est une erreur: nous ne les connaissons même pas; la réflexion est une altération et un affaiblissement de la donnée spontanée objective. Nous n'introduisons dans la connaissance de l'objet que l'accidentel; il nous donne l'essentiel (MMd,6).

Granted that Blondel was quite emotional when he recorded this conversation and might have exaggerated easily the opposition, nevertheless his report remains quite significant as evidence that one of the main issues in the French Modernist crisis was a conflict between the traditional scholastic frame of thought and the modern critical methodology.

Blondel feared a condemnation by Rome. On January 1, 1897, he begged Hügel to use his influence in Roman circles to intervene in his favor. Hügel answered a week later that such intervention with Father David of the Holy Office might complicate things; nevertheless, he visited Cardinal Rampolla and Father Lepidi (CCM, 19-20). In a letter on January 7, 1897, Beaudouin wrote that he explained to Cardinal Pierroti Blondel's apologies for his inexperience in discussing the relation "nature-supernatural," and his intention of withdrawing from circulation the famous Letter on Apologetics (Unpublished letter in MMd,62). On January 11, Georges Goyau wrote to Blondel: "Fabre épie, à ce qu'on écrit, les chuchotements qui pourraient venir du côté de l'Index; et pour plus de prudence, je viens d'écrire à M. Ollé pour qu'il fasse intervenir le Cardinal Perraud, s'il ne l'a déjà fait" (*BV*, 95). Informed by Cardinal Perraud, Leo XIII ordered immediately the congregation of the *Index* to abstain from criticizing the *Letter on Apologetics*.[1] On January 29, Albert Dufourcq was able to transmit two good news to Blondel: "(1) Sur le désir du P. Frühwirth, général des Dominicains, le P. Schwalm cessera désormais toute critique, qui pourrait être dangereuse, de vos idées; (2) Si jamais la *Lettre* ou *L'Action* était déférée à l'*Index*, le Cardinal Serafina Vannutelli la défendrait de toute son autorité" (*BV*, 95). On February 15, Hügel informed Blondel: "J'ai dit au Cardinal Rampolla qu'une condamnation ne ferait qu'attrister et irriter beaucoup, surtout des jeunes et de ceux précisément le plus du côté de la politique française et du Cardinal et du Saint Père" (*HDC*, 536). Hügel refers here to the papal policy of "railliement" to the French republic, favored in Rome by Cardinal Rampolla and by Leo XIII's encyclical *Au milieu des sollicitudes* on February 20, 1892. In France, the majority of the hierarchy, still attached to the royalty, was greatly hesitant, and sought ways of postponing what appeared to be a factual acceptance of the diminished privileges of the Church since the French Revolution. There were, however, a handful of bishops and leaders among both the clergy and the laity who supported wholeheartedly Leo's policy of "railliement." Blondel was one of them. On February 20, Blondel thanked Hügel for his intervention: Frühwirth has calmed Schwalm, and Cardinal Rampolla has reassured Cardinal Perraud on the part of Leo XIII (BV, 95).

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[1] H. Duméry, *La Philosophie de l'Action* (Paris: Montaigne, 1948), p. 176.

As far as we know, the first letters exchanged between Blondel and Loisy date from February 1897. Loisy was then chaplain to the Dominican Nuns of Neuilly. When Icard, the superior of the Sulpician seminary, forbade his students to attend Loisy's lectures on Scripture in 1892, Mgr d'Hulst, the superior of the Institut Catholique of Paris took his professor's defense. In an unfortunate article, he spoke of "two imcompatible mentalities" in regard to Scripture.[1] This article disturbed so many conservative personalities that Mgr d'Hulst was obliged to go to Rome for some explanation. This controversy became the occasion for Leo XIII's encyclical Providentissimus Deus, on November 18, 1893, in which he recalled the norms of traditional exegesis and encouraged biblical studies, so long as the final judgment is left to the Church. After a meeting of the bishops responsible for the Institut Catholique, Loisy was dismissed and assigned to a quasi-retirement.

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[1] See Le Correspondant, 170 (1893), 201-251.

In gratitude for the gift of the Letter on Apologetics, Loisy sent to Blondel his Etudes bibliques. When he finished reading Loisy's 97-pages booklet, Blondel expressed his great satisfaction in a letter on February 13, 1897 (LOI, 26). Loisy responded with praises for the Letter on Apologetics and sent a gift copy of the periodical which he had just founded, the Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature religieuse. Loisy consoled Blondel for his disappointments with theologians:

> Nous sommes des novateurs. Votre philosophie peut s'entendre avec mon exégèse. On dit même qu'elles ont ce trait commun d'avoir été désavouées comme hétérodoxes, et d'avoir échappé (espérons-le) aux censures que quelques-uns voulaient attirer sur elles. Vos vues sur le mariage de la théologie avec Aristote m'ont beaucoup frappé. Il semble, en effet, que la scholastique ait porté dans son sein des frères ennemis. Ce que vous dites sur la philosophie, la vraie, qui est autonome chez elle, me parait incontestable. Je crois aussi que la critique historique, la vraie, est autonome chez elle. Mais nous prêchons dans le désert, je le crains bien, entre les fanatiques de la science et les rationalistes de la foi. Cela ne prouve pas que nous ayons tort, au contraire. Seulement il est tout naturel qu'on nous trouve insupportables, gêneurs, téméraires, et légèrement brouillés avec le sens commun, c'est-à-dire, le sens gardien de la routine(CCM, 35)

The compiler of CCM adds the comment that Blondel was immediately suspicious of Loisy's attitude. Unfortunately, he gives no evidence for this observation. Poulat, who contests the objectivity of that compiler, indicates by a few references, the rather high esteem of Blondel for Loisy (See HDC, 514-515). As a matter of fact, Blondel replied to Loisy on February 28, He has just read Loisy's study on the beginning of the fourth Gospel. Not only does he know of La Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature religieuse, but he has subscribed to it and would gladly write an article for it if he could find time, if he had not undertaken the revision of L'Action (LOI, 26).

In February and March 1897, Laberthonnière published a theological justification for Blondel's philosophical treatment of the religious problem and defended the latter's orthodoxy against the accusations of both Schwalm and Gayraud.[1]

Blondel submitted Laberthonnière's study to his Roman theological advisor, Father Beaudouin, O.P., on April 5, 1897, for his comments:

> Il me sera précieux de savoir de vous un jour si cette théologie qui m'est si favorable, vous parait sûre, ou s'il s'y recontre quelques propositions suspectes. En écrivant, à batons rompus, ma pauvre Lettre aux Annales,

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[1] See APC, 132 (1897), 497-511; 15-32; reproduced in Essais de philosophie religieuse (Paris: Lethielleux, 1903), pp. 153-190, and reprinted in Le réalisme chrétien précédé de Essais de philosophie religieuse (Paris: Seuil, 1966), pp. 135-167. See BL, 106-108, and AP, 75. Laberthonnière received Blondel's complete approval: "Je ne trouve pas un mot, pas une lettre (questions de personnes mises à part) qui n'appelle ma plus entière adhésion, une adhésion réciproque de disciple" (BL, 108). See also footnote 1, on page 53 above.

> j'étais bien loin de prévoir la suite des discussions qu'elle susciterait. Je viens de recevoir plusieurs questionnaires d'abbés, de jésuites, de bénédictins, me demandant des éclaircissements avant de m'attaquer ou me défendre. Et je n'ai vraiment personne à qui demander conseil et lumière, si ce n'est vous, mon Révérend Père (Unpublished in MMd, 62)

In Spring 1897, a priest of the diocese of Beauvais, l'abbé Gossard, raised a long series of questions and objections to Blondel on the feasibility of replacing traditional apologetics based on the scholastic philosophy, mainly on that of St. Thomas. Blondel indicated that a radical change was necessary: "On ne recoud pas des pièces neuves à de vieux vêtements" (LP, 128). It is not simply a question of integrating new discoveries within an old system, but rather of liberating old truths without binding them to any particular system: "Dans le système de l'apologétique traditionnelle que vous m'exposez, tout est à conserver dans les matériaux, tout est à détruire et à renouveler dans l'assemblage ou le système même" (LP, 128). The scholastic system must give way to the modern critical approach with this major difference: for modern man, no speculative system is ever an adequate and exhaustive representation of reality. Blondel then listed two series of opposite theses, that of the naive intellectualism of the scholastics, and that of the critical scientific approach of moderns.[1]

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[1] See LP, 134-135; AP, 78. In the archives of Blondel, it is possible to read innumerable variations of these two

When Le Bachelet implied in several articles that Blondel was running counter to conciliar teaching,[1] the latt wrote to another Jesuit, Henri Bremond, his close friend: "Je n'ai pas besoin de vous dire que je suis d'accord avec le P. Le Bachelet sur tous les textes conciliaires ou pontificaux, et que je condamne ce qu'il condamne. D'où vient donc qu'il m'a si mal compris, qu'il me prête des opinions toutes contraires à mes déclarations formelles" (BV, 131). Largent, a professor of apologetics at the Institut Catholiq of Paris, maintained that Blondel was a victim of the subjectivism of Kant, of the phenomenism of Taine, and a Baianist ignorant of himself (AP, 70).

From Rome, Beaudouin answered on April 20, that he was far from being satisfied with Laberthonnière's theologi defense of Blondel, since he could reconcile it neither wit the council of Trent, nor with that of Vatican I. He advis Blondel to remain on the strictly philosophical gound (Un-

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published in MMd, 62). After two weeks of delay, Blondel wrote a long reply on May 9. Neither Laberthonnière, nor Blondel intend to suppress anything of the traditional teaching of the councils. With their emphasis on the neglected role of the will in the act of faith, they never thought of underestimating the role of the intellect. On the other hand, Blondel tried to convince Beaudouin that philosophy does not deal specifically with the reality of the supernatural, but with its notion. If the supernatural can in fact influence and transform man, it should be possible to study the aptitude of man for this transformation, his natural insufficiency, his need of a revelation essentially required, though humanly inaccessible; "gratuite, surnaturelle, mortifiante, humainement inaccessible, humainement nécessaire, dogmatiquement formulée, affirmée comme reçue, possédée, comme donnée, littéralement pratiquée." While theologians have well defined the conditions for belonging to the body of the Church, Blondel hopes that they will also define those conditions for belonging to its soul. This was his concern from the philosophical point of view. Given the fact of divine revelation, considered by the philosopher as a working hypothesis, this fact, dependent on God's free initiative and not ex natura, should manifest in natura, in vita nostra, a certain obligation, a certain need to be declared and satisfied. This is what Blondel understands by "l'attente religieuse." Once again, there should be no confusion between the reality of the supernatural which the theologian studies, and the phenomena produced in man by the presence of the supernatural and susceptible of philosophic inquiry. Blondel cannot agree with Beaudouin on the role of philosophy: (1) to deny its competence vis-a-vis the religious problem would grant too much to rationalists and naturalists who exclude *a priori* the supernatural; (2) to consider it simply as *ancilla theologiae* means to deny its autonomy. If there is any living synthesis of the natural and the supernatural in man, philosophy should be able to study it insofar as this synthesis has human repercussions: "Toute la question est de savoir si ce don implicite qui est indispensable pour que *les* dogmes et *les* croyances chrétiennes deviennent *nos* dogmes et *nos* croyances est constamment donné, *hic et nunc*, à tous, comment est-il infusé à la nature, quelles conditions y crée-t-il, et sous quelle forme se manifeste-t-il?" (Unpublished in *MMd*, 62).

On May 10, Blondel informed Laberthonnière of his letter to Beaudouin in which he inquired on "la possibilité, non pas d'inventer la révélation textuelle, mais de définir *l'attente religieuse* et d'étudier les conditions nécessaires ou suffisantes pour qu'un homme participe à l'âme de l'Eglise." While he used several expressions of Laberthonnière, he is still very grateful to Beaudouin for "l'appui qu'il me prête encore à

Rome" (BL, 111). Beaudouin was a consultant of the Sacred Congregation for Ecclesiastical Studies and defended Blondel in Rome whenever denunciations were reported.

In his response on May 29, Beaudouin maintained his criticisms of Laberthonnière's theology and felt that traditional theologians had never neglected what Blondel intended to emphasize. Moreover, on the problem of "l'attente religieuse," Beaudouin warned Blondel:

> Attention, cher Monsieur, nous sommes aux bords du plus profond des abymes: nous côtoyons le Pélagianisme et assurons bien nos pas. Quelle est cette grâce qui informe cette puissance, ce germe, ce principe de notre vie et d'où nait l'attente religieuse? Cette grâce est-elle de l'ordre surnaturel et gratuit, ou de l'ordre naturel? Et si elle est de l'ordre purement surnaturel, comme il faut le confesser, est-elle habituelle ou actuelle? Et alors quand est donnée cette grâce? Donc, cette aptitude n'existe pas et la méthode d'immanence ne la découvrira pas dans la nature des enfants avant le baptême.

Finally, Beaudouin emphasized that Scripture and conciliar teaching present adequately the synthesis of nature and grace with the exclusion of both extreme positions, Pelagianism and Protestantism (Unpublished in MMd,62).

Blondel answered on June 7: "Grâce à vous, je me trouve averti, retenu et fortifié" (LP, 142). A Jesuit of Lille, Fristot, found some points of agreement with Blondel and the possibility of using the method of immanence without being a Kantian: "Je ne crois pas qu'on puisse encore vous combattre comme faisant rentrer le surnaturel dans le naturel.

Au fond, vous expliquez fort heureusement et rationnellement la faculté potentielle ou puissance obedientielle que les scholastiques admettent sans l'expliquer. Le P. Beaudouin partage votre appréciation sur la philosophie des scolastiques. Vous savez que je suis entièrement du même avis" (BV, 131-132). The reader will have noticed to what extent Beaudouin, engulfed in his two-storied universe with the Thomistic superimposition of grace above nature in contrast to Blondel's immersion of grace within nature was unable to understand the method of immanence and the critical approach of Blondel. He advised him to shy away from theological problems and to limit himself to strictly philosophical questions. At the same time, Fristot realized Blondel's agreement with Beaudouin on matters of doctrine and misunderstood their disagreement on the problems of philosophy.

In August 1897, Blondel went to the international congress of Catholic scholars in Fribourg, Switzerland. Unable to attend, Hügel asked Semeria to read his paper on the historical method applied to Scripture and his endorsement of Wellhausen's four sources theory for the Pentateuch (See CCM, 21). The baron informed Laberthonnière that his paper contained a praise to the address of Blondel:

> C'est bien comme un nouveau Platon, un réconciliateur du mouvement avec le repos, un ostiarius qui fait r'entrer la vie en l'Eglise, source et foyer de stabité, que j'aime

> souvent à me le figurer. Oh, que nous avons besoin de cela; purification, surnaturalisation, orientation, que nous avons besoin de cela; mais point d'arrêt, point d'amoindrissement, point de froideur ou de hautaine finalité, négation profonde de la créaturalité de l'homme et de l'absolu et infini de Dieu (LAB, 59).

In Fribourg, Blondel had two long interviews with Schwalm during which several misconceptions apparently were cleared away (BL, 113-114).

Blondel failed to convince Gossard by his letter of April 13, 1897. In another letter on August 31, he came back to the Letter on Apologetics: "Vous m'attribuez d'autre part l'intention de supprimer l'apologétique traditionnelle, et d'y substituer une autre apologétique nouvelle. C'est dénaturer ma pensée" (LP, 149). Blondel does not want to reject truths affirmed in the past, but only to criticize a pseudo-philosophical system which pretends to protect them. He hopes to recover traditional truths and bolster them on a really philosophical basis: "Il est donc possible que des vérités toujours crues et toujours pratiquées dans l'Eglise aient encore besoin d'être conquises par une réflexion systématique qui les érige en vérités de science ou de philosophie. Or, je n'ai pas prétendu faire autre chose" (LP, 150). In other words, it was his intention to devise a philosophic system to encompass all the beliefs and practices of the Church, a task which in his opinion the scholastic synthesis had failed to do: "Il m'a paru nécessaire, non de supprimer les anciens matériaux traditionnels, main d'en renouveler l'assemblage et de reprendre l'édifice en sous-oeuvre" (LP, 151). However much the Christian truths might be valid in themselves, the scholastic synthesis, which Blondel wants to replace by a modern critical approach, has not satisfied the requirements of the contemporary mind and has not presented convincingly these truths as such for us. The problem remains: "Comment l'apologétique de la crédibilité objective valable en droit, sort-elle du domaine de la possibilité abstraite et devient-elle valable en fait, et réelle et vivante dans la croyance effective?" (LP, 151-152).

At the end of September 1897, Blondel informed Laberthonnière of a long conversation with Beaudouin. The Letter on Apologetics offended many authorities in Rome. Thanks to the protection of influential friends, Blondel escaped condemnation even though he had been accused of Pelagianism and Molinism (BL, 115-116). As a matter of fact, in a famous sermon at St. Sulpice in Paris, Father Coubé publicly accused Blondel: "L'Eglise vous crie: 'Pélage et hérésie'" (BV, 322).

Hügel and Tyrrell understood better that Blondel's attempt was not a rejection of Christian truths, but a reformulation of them. In a letter to Blondel dated December 21, 1897, Hügel reported Tyrrell's observations: "L'on peut dire bien des choses, pourvu que l'on retienne les vieux mots familiers, tandis que Blondel use d'une nouvelle langue qui rendra suspecte même son affirmation la plus ordinaire." On this point, Hügel did not quite agree with Tyrrell and shared Blondel's ambition of adopting new wineskins: "Il me semble que nous conquerrons, s'il est possible, la liberté de dire enfin, parfois du moins, la vérité éternelle dans la langue de notre temps à nous" (HDC, 537). The difficulties encountered, the threats of condemnation, the accusations of heresy, soon convinced Blondel of the necessity to be extremely prudent and circumspect in the expression of his ideas. He wrote to Hügel on January 6, 1898: "Je suis si frappé de la nécessité d'être très peu provocant, de respecter les déclarations officielles, afin d'assurer le renouvellement de fond en comble, la revivification de tout l'organisme. De plus en plus je vois l'importance et aussi la difficulté extrême d'une telle entreprise" (HDC, 535; the underlining is mine).

Blondel, along with Hügel and Tyrrell, Laberthonnière and Loisy, was undertaking the major task of up-dating the whole intellectual life of the Church in agreement with the modern critical methods, in philosophy and theology, in biblical exegesis and historical criticism, as well as in hagiography and the spiritual life. In a letter to Laberthonnière on March 5, 1898, Blondel wrote: "La tradition est toute à vivifier." The old scholastic synthesis was neither scientific, nor philosophical. Therefore, "il s'agit d'organiser et d'unir dans la science réfléchie ce qui n'a été intégré et parfait jusqu'ici que dans la vie et par la pensée implicite des chrétiens plus riches d'âme que de philosophie" (BL, 118-119). There is no doubt for the historian that Thomism at the turn of the century was much more literal and far less critical than the Thomism depicted by recent historical research, including even the conservative interpretations of Gilson.

Tyrrell saw the wisdom of working within the framework of the scholastic synthesis, while renewing it completely from within by the application of modern critical methods: "Je ne puis m'empêcher de croire que si l'on voulait étudier saint Thomas non comme une autorité, mais d'une facon critique et historique comme un génie, une telle étude serait déjà, à elle seule, un très précieux instrument d'éducation ecclésiastique. Si l'on parvenait à faire diverger le mouvement en cette direction, nous trouverions la vie et non plus la mort" (HDC, 537). Hügel became gradually convinced of this wisdom and he proposed it to Blondel: "Il est d'une très grande importance que vos travaux ne paraissent, au moins pour le moment, que comme une entre plusieurs formes et nuances d'une tendance ou école qui, comme telle, est, depuis des siècles, bien établie, bien acceptée de l'Eglise catholique" (HDC, 536). ſ

Blondel read with great interest and benefit a review written by Tyrrell on the Esquisse d'une philosophie de la religion of Auguste Sabatier. He wrote his impressions to Hügel on August 18, 1898:

> Combien il y aurait de terrain gagné le jour ou l'on comprendrait, en effet, que la science, que la philosophie, que la pensée n'est qu'un symbolisme de signes toujours perfectibles, et que, en particulier, la scholastique est, comme le langage latin et liturgique lui-même, un système de formules qui conservent le trésor des saintes lettres mais appellent le travail interprétatif de l'esprit, ne fût-ce que pour saisir le sens propre et original dans lequel les définitions sont primitivement formulées. De tels articles, si justes, si fins, si pénétrants, si inattaquables, sont un grand service rendu à l'Eglise (HDC, 538).

However, the conservatives continued to be watchfully suspicious. In order to avoid head-on conflicts with theological inquisitors, more and more of Blondel's friends advised him to keep silence for a while.[1] When Laberthonnière, in his defense of Blondel, met with increasing opposition, the latter advised him to make some bold affirmations as he had done earlier in similar circumstances: "Je ne suis pas ontologiste, j'ai horreur du subjectivisme, j'anathématise le panthéisme!" Blondel recognized the necessity of such a lightning-rod to avert the thunderbolts of the neoscholastics. (BL, 144).

Poulat has correctly observed: "Blondel n'avait cessé d'être très combattu depuis sa thèse en 1893, et jusqu'en 1902 il fut, avant Loisy, l'ennemi numéro 1" (HDC, 21, footnote 62).

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[1] See BL, 120; 121; BV, 35; 43; 57; 118-119; 124; 138; 167; and so forth.

It is impossible, within the limits of this thesis, to prolong our sketch of Blondel before 1902. Enough has been said to explain his position before the French Modernist crisis reached its apogee with the publication of Loisy's _L'Evangile et L'Eglise_.

CHAPTER III

THE PUBLICATION OF LOISY'S L'EVANGILE ET L'EGLISE

Newman's Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine in 1845 hardly made an impact on Roman Catholic theologians of his time. Most of them continued to maintain the objective immutability of the "deposit" of revelation.[1] Loisy was one of the first to take seriously Newman's theory in a pseudonymous article in 1898.[2] If Christianity represents a living idea, incarnate in a given organic society, it should manifest the characteristics of a certain biological development according to which the original germ absorbs and transforms its nourishment, grows and develops both according to its internal teleology and in response to the stimulation from external influences. This conception appeared to Loisy to be a fruitful scientific hypothesis to explain Roman Catholicism. He felt that such a theory is not limited to Christianity, but can be applied to the whole history of religion. Because Newman was not sufficiently concerned with modern biblical studies, he did not explicitly relate Christian revelation to the subsequent doctrinal development. Even though Newman's theory exercised little impact on the official Catholic theology, Loisy accepted it:

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[1] See J. Bellamy, La théologie catholique au XIXe siècle (Paris: Beauchesne, 1904), p. 134; see also, J. Guitton, La philosophie de Newman: Essai sur l'idée de développement (Paris: Boivin, 1933); J. H. Walgrave, Newman: Le Développement du Dogme (Paris: Casterman, 1957); A. A. Stephenson, "Cardinal Newman and the Development of Doctrine," Journal of Ecumenical Studies, 3 (1966), 463-485; on page 464, Stephenson wrote: "A good theory will emphasize the immutability of doctrine and will regard the invention of the phrase 'the development of doctrine' as a disaster, a red herring, the source of endless confusion in subsequent theology."

[2] A. Firmin [A. Loisy], "Le développement chrétien d'après le Cardinal Newman," RCF, 17 (1898), 5-20.

> Elle n'en est pas moins d'une manière très réelle en possession de la tradition, puisque les choses se sont passées comme si on y avait cru, puisque l'Eglise n'a pas cessé de se développer sans hésitation ni scrupule en la façon que décrit Newman, puisque toute l'histoire est là pour déposer en faveur de la théorie. On l'admettait donc implicitement, équivalement, le besoin ne s'étant pas fait sentir encore de la formuler explicitement; aujourd'hui que le besoin existe, la formule nait; elle pourra être perfectionnée, elle le sera; mais il ne faut pas la condamner comme absolument nouvelle; ce n'est que l'expression, appropriée à nos connaissances actuelles, de la tradition même et du Christianisme tels que leur histoire, tels que leurs documents nous les montrent. Si elle n'a pas encore sa place dans les manuels théologiques, tout porte à croire qu'elle l'aura bientôt, et cette place ne sera pas moins assurée que celle des notions, scientifiques aussi par leur origine, qui, aux moments décisifs du développement chrétien, ont déterminé l'orientation de la théologie (Ibid., p. 18).

Loisy gives some examples of such notions, scientific at their origin, which determined eventually the orientation of theology in the Christian development: the idea of the Logos, the idea of consubstantiality, the idea of transsubstantiation.

During the academic year of 1899-1900, Adolph Harnack gave a series of remarkable lectures at the University of Berlin on the "Essence of Christianity."[1] Harnack limited himself to an historical study of the essence of Christianity: "We shall employ the methods of historical science, and the experience of life gained by studying the actual course of history. This excludes the view of the question taken by the apologist and the religious philosopher."[2] As a liberal Protestant, Harnack had a definite point of departure: "The Christian religion is something simple and sublime; it means one thing and one thing only: Eternal life in the midst of time, by the strength and under the eyes of God. It is no ethical or social _arcanum_ for the preservation or improvement of things generally" (_Ibid_., p. 8). Christianity is not a doctrine handed down through generations, but "a _life_, again and again kindled afresh, and now burning with a flame of its own" (p. 11). It is important to "distinguish kernel and husk" (p. 12). Because "the Gospel in the Gospel is something so simple," (p. 14), it should be easy to recognize the various transformations of the Christian idea in the course of history. Jesus' message can be summarized under three heads: (1) the kingdom of God and its coming; (2) God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul; (3) the higher righteousness and the commandment of love (p. 51). When Harnack came to the relations between the Gospel and Roman Catholicism, his conclusions were derogatory: "The whole outward and visible institution of a Church claiming divine dignity has no foundation whatever in the Gospel. It is a case, not of distortion, but of total perversion" (p. 262).

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[1] These lectures were published in book form in 1900. They were first translated in English in 1901 by T. B. Saunders, and in French in 1902 by Blanche Calmard; see _HDC_, 46, note 46.

[2] _What is Christianity_? (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957), p. 6.

Apart from a few scholars, rare were the Catholics in France who took notice of Harnack's lectures before Loisy undertook to refute his working hypothesis and historical interpretation. Although Loisy had been forbidden officially to write on theological subjects, he was not without exercising a certain influence in ecclesiastical circles. For instance, in a letter to Loisy on July 25, 1901, Hügel reported that at the French seminary in Rome, a group of thirty students were circulating secretly "des cours de Blondel en philosophie, en exégèse de Loisy, en histoire ecclésiastique de Duchesne" (MEM-I, 56; see HDC, 270).

One of Loisy's friends, Paul Desjardins, was able to offer him a new field of action. Desjardins' wife was the daughter-in-law of Gaston Paris, then administrator of the Collège de France. Through the influence of Paris, Loisy was invited in 1900 to give "un cours libre" at the Sorbonne on the Near Eastern religions, and in 1902 to collaborate in the preparation of the Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum (AL, 98). At the death of Auguste Sabatier, Loisy expected to succeed him. He was greatly disappointed when he realized that the Sorbonne was not disposed to elect a priest as a titular professor; he mentioned this in a letter to his friend, bishop Lucien Lacroix, on September 16, 1901: "On me promettait que je serais titularisé le plus tôt possible. Mais il semblerait presque maintenant qu'on espérait que je me serais sécularisé" (LAC, 24401).

When Loisy's book, La religion d'Israel, was on the point of being condemned, bishop Lacroix wrote to Lepidi, secretary of the Index, on November 30, 1901:

> Au sujet des sentences de l'Index, je suis convaincu que ces décisions s'imposeraient avec plus d'autorité si elles étaient précédées de l'exposé des motifs qui ont déterminé les juges à inscrire un livre au catalogue de l'Index. Le public étant mieux renseigné, s'inclinerait plus facilement devant la sentence rendue. De plus, quand il s'agit d'un prêtre ou d'un catholique bien connu comme tel, j'estime qu'avant de le condamner, il serait à la fois plus conforme à la justice et à la charité chrétienne, de lui signaler secrètement les erreurs qu'il a commises et de l'inviter à les corriger dans une nouvelle édition. De cette façon, on lui éviterait cette sorte de flétrissure qui rejaillit presque fatalement sur un auteur quand un de ses livres a été mis à l'Index. En ce qui concerne M. Loisy, je tiens à

> vous répéter que ce prêtre jouit de l'estime et de la considération de tous ses confrères par la dignité et la correction de sa vie. Je ne suis pas assez compétent pour me prononcer sur la valeur de ses théories en matière d'exégèse. Mais étant donné que son crédit est considérable dans le monde scientifique, peut-être conviendrait-il de ne le censurer qu'après avoir démontré clairement que ses thèses sont absolument fausses. Dans un pays d'opinion comme le nôtre et dans un siècle de critique à outrance, rien ne serait plus préjudiciable aux intérêts religieux qu'une condamnation non motivée par des erreurs manifestes. Un excès d'indulgence présenterait à coup sûr moins d'inconvénients qu'une mesure de rigueur qui aurait infailliblement pour effet de froisser et d'aliéner tous les savants. Du reste, en s'adressant à M. Loisy lui-même et en le traitant avec tous les égards que méritent son talent et son caractère, je suis intimement persuadé qu'on obtiendra de meilleurs résultats et que de lui-même, il corrigera les points qui lui auront été signalés comme défectueux.[1]

On January 10, 1902, Loisy informed Lacroix that Leo XIII intervened personally to avoid his condemnation by the Holy Office and the _Index_, and formed a Biblical Commission of members better informed to deal with scriptural problems. Nevertheless, his book was condemned by Cardinal Richard of Paris.

When Loisy read that Harnack considered the Roman

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[1] _LAC_, 24401. In the same archives of Lacroix, as well as in the archives of Loisy, there is ample proof of Loisy's dispositions as expressed here by Lacroix. Bishop Lacroix was so displeased with the intrigues which led to the radical condemnation of Modernism, that he resigned in 1907 after the promulgation of the encyclical _Pascendi_ and became a director of studies at the Sorbonne (_AL_, 371).

Catholic church to be in complete opposition to the Gospel, he resolved to prove exactly the contrary, to prove that the Church is the logical and historical development and continuation of the Gospel. For years, while a chaplain at Neuilly, he accumulated notes for a long study on the historical origins of the Church (AL, 109). In his studies on the Synoptic Gospels, Loisy realized that Harnack's thesis rested on a later redaction, a product of tradition, practically Catholic, and therefore not primitively evangelical, quite unfortunately for a Protestant! On May 18, 1902, he wrote to Hügel: "J'ai presque envie de jouer un tour à Harnack en montrant que le texte qui porte tout son système,--idée du Dieu-Père et conscience filiale de Jésus--ne présente pas plus de garanties que les textes de Jean" (MEM-II, 121). It took Loisy only six weeks to write L'Evangile et L'Eglise. The manuscript was submitted to archbishop Mignot on August 26 and returned on September 17 with this comment:

> Vous n'avez encore écrit rien d'aussi complet ni d'aussi objectif; c'est vous dire que je regretterais vivement que cette étude, qui est tout autre chose qu'une réfutation d'Harnack ne fut pas publiée. Je ne pense pas que l'on puisse vous condamner; et, tout au contraire cette publication vous placera au premier rang des critiques chrétiens (LOI, 27).[1]

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[1] Loisy's book was first published by Picard on November 10, 1902: L'Evangile et L'Eglise (Paris: Picard, 1902); a second edition was published by the author himself at Bellevue in 1903 with two important additions, a first chapter on the

Two of Loisy's books, *L'Evangile et L'Eglise* and *Les Etudes évangéliques* were published on the same day. The author was very concerned about the effect that they would produce on his readers and noted his hesitation in his diary on October 13, 1902:

> Tous les deux représentent un effort pour adapter le catholicisme théorique aux faits de l'histoire, et le catholicisme pratique aux réalités de la vie contemporaine. Cet effort est-il nécessaire et peut-il être utile? A prendre les choses par un certain côté, il peut sembler superflu et plutôt nuisible. Le catholicisme réel, officiel, celui qui existe et qui parle, proteste plutôt contre cette adaptation et s'y refuse. Beaucoup se demandent, non sans raison, si, en essayant de le changer, on ne contribue pas à le détruire. Il parait si étroitement lié à une conception du monde, de la vie et de la société qui ne covient plus à notre temps, que l'inviter à modifier sa manière d'être semble équivaloir à lui suggérer une sorte de suicide que l'on ne peut se flatter d'obtenir par persuasion. Et d'autre part, on a vu de si grands changements dans le passé, le besoin de changer est si urgent, qu'il y aurait crime à ne rien dire devant une pareille situation. L'Eglise est à exterminer comme la grande ennemie du progrès humain, si elle n'est pas susceptible d'amendement.

Gospel sources and section III of chapter III on the Son of God: a third edition published again by the author at Bellevue in 1904 represents the definitive text; a fourth edition was published again by the author at Ceffonds in 1908; the fifth edition, with a preface dated from 1914, was published by Nourry, in Paris, in 1929. Before the first edition was censured by Cardinal Richard on January 20, 1903, 1,500 copies had already been sold: see *MEM*-I, 121-219; *HDC*, 60; Houtin, *La question biblique au XXe siècle* (Paris: Nourry, 1906), pp. 80ff.; *AL*, 305-306. It was translated in English by Christopher Home; *The Gospel and the Church* (London: Isbister, 1903); in German by J. Grière-Becker: *Evangelium und Kirche* (München: Kirchheim, 1904); and in Spanish by A. G. Fraud: *El Evangelio y la Iglesia* (Madrid: Francisco Beltran, n.d. [1910]).

> Au contraire, elle est à soutenir, à défendre et à éclairer par tous les moyens, si elle est encore la grande ressource morale de la civilisation. Ceux qui choisissent le premier parti n'ont pas pour eux que des prétextes. Cependant, je crois que c'est le second qui est vrai.[1]

In L'Evangile et L'Eglise, Loisy proposed to make a careful study of Harnack's book, strictly from the historical viewpoint. Just as Harnack had done, he deliberately set aside the apologetical perspective: "On n'entend pas démontrer ici la vérité de l'Evangile ni celle du christianisme catholique, mais on essaie seulement d'analyser et de définir le rapport qui les unit dans l'histoire. Le lecteur de bonne foi ne s'y trompera pas" (EE, vii). Since most of those who criticized negatively Loisy's book did so on the grounds that he was not faithful to traditional apologetics, there is a strong presumption that he found few readers who paid any attention to his statement of purpose in his introduction. Harnack's reduction of Christianity to one essence seemed arbitrary to Loisy. Can such a complex historical religion be reduced to a simple definition: "La définition du christianisme, d'après M. Harnack, est-elle d'un historien, ou seulement d'un théologien qui prend dans l'histoire ce qui convient à sa théologie?" (EE, ix). Harnack would have used the same definition in his History of Dogma.

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[1] A. Loisy, Choses passées (Paris: Nourry, 1913), p. 242; see HDC, 115.

In order to determine the essence of Christianity, Loisy proposed to submit the Gospels to the rules of sound criticism. The essential elements are not necessarily those that have more value today, but those that occupied the central place in the Gospel, those which preoccupied the early Christians. The application of a similar inquiry for each century should determine to what extent Christianity has remained faithful to its origins. If some common traits were preserved and developed from the origins until our time, these traits constitute the essence of Christianity. At least, the historian is limited by what his research has manifested. Christianity cannot be reduced to what it does not share with other religions; it has many elements in common with them; for example, monotheism.

The essence of the Gospel can be established only after a critical discussion of the numerous, clear, and guaranteed texts of the earliest redaction. According to Loisy, Harnack was not faithful to these rules of criticism since his conclusion is based mainly on two passages (Mt. 11: 27; Lk. 17: 21), both products of a later redaction. Furthermore, since Christ did not leave any writing of his own, it is not possible to know anything of his teaching except through tradition, the primitive Christian tradition. There is no pure Gospel of Jesus independently of early Christian tradition. In support of this understanding, Loisy quoted a passage from Edward Caird.[1] Why limit the essence of Christianity to one element arbitrarily chosen and considered as immutable? Why not see the essence of Christianity in the plenitude and totality of its life, and if it is life, in movement and variety? Harnack's reduction has deprived Christianity of all contact with reality, of all footing in history; it rejected all the elements of stability: ritual, dogma, and hierarchy. Reduced as it is to an idealistic category, it concerns only conscience, not science. Loisy does not want to discuss further Harnack's theology; he will limit himself to a criticism of his historical understanding of Christianity: "On va seulement vérifier si son 'essence du christianisme,' au lieu d'être la religion absolue, le christianisme absolu, entités qui ont peu de chance d'appartenir à l'histoire, ne marquerait pas une étape ou ne serait pas simplement une formule radicale du protestantisme" (EE, xxxiv).

The main theme of Jesus' message was the proclamation of the coming kingdom of heaven. In this respect, Jesus shared the apocalyptic eschatology of his contemporaries. He insisted also on the remission of sins, the reconciliation with God, the precept of love, and faith in God. The Gospel cannot be summarized in one absolute theme; it is rather a living and complex belief in the kingdom of God. Harnack's conception of the Son of God is neither scriptural, nor traditional. The role of the Messiah was understood in an eschatological perspective. The Apostolic church proclaimed that Jesus became Christ and Lord by his resurrection. A purely critical examination of Scripture cannot discover the messianic consciousness in the soul of Jesus. He called himself Son of God in the same measure as he spoke of his messianic role, that is, in an eschatological context. Even though Jesus did not teach a christology, he did demand faith in his person, his message, his mission, and his promise of the kingdom. Everything in the Gospel of Jesus entered in the Christian tradition and developed through time under the primitive impulse of Christ in order to serve the same ideal and the same hope.

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[1] "Christianity and the historical Christ," The New World, 6 (1897), 7-8.

Harnack's conception of the Church is no more intelligible and real than his conception of Christ. He abandoned all visible structures: hierachy, dogma, and liturgy. For Loisy, the Gospel bears witness to the structural elements of the Church. The Church became what was required for it to be in order to remain faithful to the Gospel: "L'Eglise peut dire que, pour être, à toutes les époques ce que Jésus a voulu que fût la société de ses amis, elle a dû être ce qu'elle a été; car elle a été ce qu'elle avait besoin d'être pour sauver l'Evangile en se sauvant elle-même" (EE, 136). The Gospel cannot be detached from the Church: "L'Eglise est aussi nécessaire à l'Evangile que l'Evangile est nécessaire à l'Eglise ... les deux ne font qu'un dans la réalité, comme l'Evangile et le groupe des croyants ne faisaient qu'un pendant le ministère de Jésus" (EE, 137-138). It is true that Jesus did not leave behind him the juridical constitution of the Church; neither did he expect a purely invisible society of believers in the goodness of God. Jesus announced the kingdom of God and it was the Church that came. The Church understood itself as the beginning and the entrance to the kingdom.

Along with earlier Christian theologians, Harnack maintained the immutability of dogma; instead of several dogmas, however, he limited himself to one. Even though the Gospel has a permanent value, wrote Loisy, it still needs interpretation and commentary. The dogmas proceed from the Gospel and develop as the needs of the Church require more explicit formulations of its faith. According to Loisy, there are divine and human elements in dogma: "Que les dogmes soient divins par l'origine et la substance, ils sont humains de structure et de composition.... La raison ne cesse de poser des questions à la foi, et les formules traditionnelles sont soumises à un travail perpétuel d'interprétation" (EE, 201). In opposition to most scholastic theologians, Loisy distinguished between the object of faith and the dogmatic formulation used to express it: "L'Eglise n'exige pas la foi à ses formules comme à l'expression adéquate de la vérité absolue, mais elle les présente comme l'expression la moins imparfaite qui soit moralement possible; elle demande qu'on les respecte selon leur qualité, qu'on y cherche la foi, qu'on s'en serve pour la transmettre" (EE, 216).

Finally, Loisy came to Catholic worship. History knows of no religion without some kind of liturgy. It is true, Jesus no more designed the Christian liturgy than he drew the constitution and defined the dogmas of the Church. But it was inevitable that these came to guarantee the stability and continuity of the Church. Christian worship developed as the social expression of Christian faith.

Although Loisy's book, completed at the end of August 1902, was not published until mid-November, Laberthonnière asked Blondel on September 14, 1902: "Veuillez donc me dire si l'abbé Loisy vous a envoyé son nouvel ouvrage, L'Evangile et L'Eglise. Au cas où vous ne l'auriez pas encore, je m'empresserais de vous l'envoyer car il parait que l'édition va s'épuiser très vite, et l'abbé Loisy a pour principe de ne pas rééditer, et vous regretteriez vivement de ne pas l'avoir. Je n'en ai pas tout à fait achevé la lecture; je le trouve de premier ordre" (Unpublished in MMd, 41).

When Andrieu, the superior of the major seminary of Digne, visited Blondel in Quincy, the latter informed Wehrlé on September 15, 1902, of the ignorance of scriptural studies at that seminary: "Heureux pays! Quand il y est arrivé, il y a un an, le séminaire ne recevait pas une seule revue, et le professeur d'Ecriture sainte ne soupçonnait pas et ne soupçonne pas encore qu'il y a une question biblique et des controverses exégétiques" (BV, 110).

Blondel answered to Laberthonnière on September 17 that he has been informed recently of a narrow ecclesiastical mentality unable to share in the scope and philosophic bearing of Loisy (LAB, 133). On October 8, he told Laberthonnière his surprise when he heard that Mourret was asked to teach successively apologetics, then dogma, then church history, without any special preparation: "Quelle belle idée de la Science, qu'on regarde comme chose faite, qu'un homme intelligent et laborieux n'a qu'à ramasser dans les livres où elle est, sans en avoir vécu, sans l'avoir épousée!" (LAB, 133).

Ever since Blondel met the opposition of neoscholastic theologians and was accused by them, not only of all sorts of philosophical errors, but also of many heresies: ontologism, monism, naturalism, rationalism, subjectivism, idealism, Kantism, Hegelianism, Pelagianism, Baianism, Jansenism, Protestantism, Lutheranism, and so forth, he proposed to write a major work on "Apologetics and the Christian Spirit." Such a work would prove his orthodoxy while it would help theologians and apologists to understand better the modern critical methods and the contemporary requirements of the educated man.[1] There are innumerable redactions and variations of this "Summa apologetica" in his archives. They follow basically the same plan as the Letter on Apologetics. First came a long introduction in which he proposed a complete change of methodology, because "it is not good to put new wine in old wineskins." On the one hand, wrote Blondel, professors of fundamental theology should realize why they are preaching in the desert, just as the rationalists, on the other hand, have deaf ears for the teaching of religion because there is no common language between them. The transformation of traditional apologetics is required not only in its formal exposition, but also in its doctrinal content: there has been a progress of ideas, theories, philosophical and religious customs. After a long critical exposition and refutation of the traditional forms of apologetics, mainly because they are based on a naive intellectualism and the pseudo-philosophical system of the scholastics,

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[1] See BV, 69-73. In a letter on September 12, 1902, Wehrlé informed Blondel that he expects to obtain the approbation of Lepidi, the secretary of the Index, and thus link Blondel to the living center of Catholic unity (BV, 72).

Blondel offered an elaborate exposition of the truly critical and philosophical approach to the problem of religion in general, to the problem of Christianity more specifically, and to the problem of Roman Catholicism in particular. This section contained his philosophical premises for the exegetical methodology. Finally, in a long conclusion, Blondel tried to integrate all the wealth of Christian tradition in a new synthesis, respecting both the ultimate demands of Christianity as well as the ultimate expectations of the modern critical approach. For such a monumental work, he expected to receive the advice and criticism of numerous scholars of all fields of science, as well as of theologians and ecclesiastical authorities. He planned to circulate his manuscript among them, calling upon their collaboration, placing himself provisionally on the Index, donec corrigatur, donec permittatur. Blondel never published his "Apologetics and the Christian Spirit" in its original form because of the Modernist crisis. It is possible to find most of Blondel's plans in a recent book by Raymond Saint-Jean, L'Apologétique philosophique: Blondel, 1893-1913 (Paris: Aubier, 1966).

In March 1902, Albert Houtin published La question biblique chez les catholiques de France au XIXe siècle (Paris: Picard, 1902), in which he described the conflict within the Roman Catholic church in France over the introduction of modern biblical studies. While the archbishop of Paris was condemning the articles of Loisy, the archbishop of Albi was defending them. In these circumstances, Loisy resolved to abandon the field of apologetics: "Contraint, pour ainsi dire, à se réfugier sur le terrain de la science, il entend s'y tenir, non pas par indifférence pour les questions théologiques et pour les intérêts de l'Eglise dont il s'honore d'être membre, mais parce que la situation que certaines personnes ont voulu lui faire devant l'opinion catholique exige de lui cette attitude."[1] The conservative theologians won a victory. This is not surprising, as the priests informed of modern biblical studies were the exception and the courses of Scripture given in seminaries were outdated.

Wehrlé wrote to Blondel on October 29, 1902: "Le livre d'Albert Houtin est _remarquable_. Comme oeuvre documentaire, c'est l'expression exacte de ce qui est, sans plus. Il y a là une grande habileté d'exposition, une érudition considérable et de bon aloi, et des indications précieuses" (_CCM_, 152-153). Wehrlé deplored only the ironical and bitter tone of Houtin. Blondel answered on November 2: "Je partage tout à fait vos impressions sur la question biblique, et je trouverai sûrement profit à lire votre Note sur la méthode d'exégèse; j'y consacrerai un chapître de ma Somne" (*CCM*, 153). He found also Houtin's attitude bitter, but perhaps usefully so. On November 7, Wehrlé mentioned his reading of Loisy's *Etudes bibliques* and *Livre de Job* which he recommends to Blondel if he has not already read them, adding: "J'ai la plus grande, la plus fervente admiration pour ce vrai exégète et ce vrai théologien, privé de sa chaire et réduit à une condition misérable" (*CCM*, 49). While the compiler of *CCM* speaks of "réserves immédiates" of Blondel, Poulat for good reasons contests such an attitude (see *HDC*, 516).

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[1] A. Loisy, _Les mythes babyloniens et les premiers chapîtres de la Genèse_ (Paris: Picard, 1901) p. v; see Houtin, _op. cit._, pp. 273-274.

On November 10, Archbishop Mignot, who read advance copies of *Les Etudes évangeliques* and *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, wrote to Loisy his favorable impression of the latter book:

> Ceux qui ne vous ont jamais lu et qui ne vous connaissent que par vos adversaires, qui sont effrayés de vos hardiesses et ne voient en vous qu'un démolisseur--selon l'idée charitable qu'on leur a donnée de vous--seront surpris, s'ils vous comprennent, de trouver en vous un défenseur de leur foi. Ce sera pour beaucoup une révélation. Je le répète: ce livre, malgré les inévitables oppositions qu'il va rencontrer, vous fera le plus grand bien en ce moment, surtout si l'on a l'équité de tenir compte des observations ou réserves que vous présentez dans la préface (*LOI*, 27).

During 1901-1902, Henri Bremond followed Loisy's lectures on the Gospel parables at the Sorbonne. When he read *L'Evangile et l'Eglise*, he wrote to Loisy on November 13, 1902: "Que je vous remercie de tout ce que vous avez mis dans ce petit livre. Grand Dieu! Quand je songe à ces lamentables classes de théologie que j'ai subies pendant quatre ans! oui, quatre ans! - Voilà pourtant la seule façon de comprendre les choses: il faudra bien qu'ils y viennent; mais nous ne verrons pas cela. Enfin, je me demande comment ils feront, cette fois, pour vous accuser de germaniser et protestantiser à outrance."[1]

On the same day, Wehrlé recommended Blondel to study the doctrine of St. Augustine on grace and predestination. He believed that a reconciliation of the Augustinian and Blondelian doctrines would be difficult but useful. Wehrlé did not want to create further difficulties for Blondel, but in the absence of any modern theology, why not return to that of the fathers of the Church? Since the theologians have forgotten to philosophize, Wehrlé invites a genuine philosopher to teach them how to theologize with an ancient faith according to modern tastes.[2]

On November 15, Hügel asked Loisy for fifteen copies of L'Evangile et L'Eglise for distribution among his scholarly friends. He comments on the book: "C'est tout simplement superbe. Jamais vous n'avez rien fait de plus fort, de plus beau, de plus propre à entrer tôt ou tard, plus ou moins, en cette modification de la manière de présenter, de concevoir le catholicisme, par l'Eglise officielle elle-même" (HDC, 541). Hügel was very optimistic on the eventual official ratification of Loisy's efforts.

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[1] A. Loisy, George Tyrrell et Henri Bremond (Paris: Nourry, 1936), p. 5.

[2] As a matter of fact, a great number of prominent Roman Catholic theologians in France today, those who are responsible for the biblical, patristic, and liturgical revival, owe much to the influence of Blondel.

On November 17, Blondel informed Laberthonnière of a grippe which hampered his activities since the end of October, of his depression in the present conflict between impatient scholars and obstinate conservatives, and of his resignation: "Faisons donc d'avance le sacrifice de notre raison, de notre effort, de notre succès; et travaillons avec confiance, pour être vaincus, puisque cette défaite sera, de façon mystérieuse la victoire de Dieu" (LAB,133).[1] It is not surprising if Blondel found somewhat laborious his first reading of L'Evangile et L'Eglise. He affirmed, nevertheless, that his own philosophy was the best safeguard for Loisy's exegesis: "A'ma tête fatiguée cela a paru un peu enveloppé, tout en nuances, ne cherchant ou ne montrant du

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[1] Blondel was practically ready to commit an intellectual suicide if this were required to maintain his loyalty to the Church. In his notes, he recalls often the statement of Thomas Aquinas on his death-bed, ready to burn all his theological works when he compared them with the beatific vision he was hoping for.

Christ que le fieri extérieur, la psychologie humaine, l'évolution historique. Mais cette impression sur les deux premiers chapîtres doit être injuste et sera contredite par la suite, quoiqu'il reste peut-être vrai de dire que notre apologétique est la seule garantie de leur critique" (BL, 154-155). While Blondel and Laberthonnière were not biblical scholars as Hügel and Loisy, Blondel viewed the philosophy of L'Action as the necessary basis for "their" exegesis. Two days later, still feverish, Blondel informed Laberthonnière that he is well advanced in Loisy's book: "J'ai la tête si brisée que des pages entières passent sous mes yeux comme si je dormais: mais ce que j'en vois est en effet de première valeur, et d'infinie efficacité. C'est en somme ce que nous voulons dire, non plus seulement pour comprendre le passé et le présent, mais pour préparer l'avenir de l'Eglise" (LAB, 133). Basically, Blondel agrees with Loisy and understands the latter's exegesis and historical studies as a parallel effort to his own philosophy for the renewal of the intellectual life in the Church. Laberthonnière answered on November 20 that Loisy seems to him to have an implicit christology, even if he claims to limit himself to the historical phenomena. Laberthonnière admires the chapters on the Church and dogma: "Mais il y a là un sens profond de la réalité et de la vie. Jamais le catholicisme, au point de vue où se place l'auteur, n'a été mieux dégagé de l'anarchie protestante, et de l'authoritarisme ultramontain" (BL, 155).

Again, on November 20, Tyrrell wrote to Loisy that L'Evangile et L'Eglise gave a more useful interpretation of early Christianity than Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes of J. Weiss, and the best response to Das Wesen des Christentums of A. Harnack: "Votre livre peut, je crois, échapper aux attaques jalouses de ceux qui gardent la clef de la science, ne voulant pas entrer eux-mêmes, ni permettre aux autres d'entrer."[1] There are many Jesuits favorable to Loisy, according to Tyrrell, but their discipline prevents them from voicing their personal attitude.

On November 25, Blondel thanked Loisy for L'Evangile et L'Eglise and two copies of La religion d'Israel.[2] Sickness prevented Blondel from answering sooner. Of L'Evangile et L'Eglise, Blondel praised the limpidity of the style, the serenity of the tone, the fine, rich, and clear nuances. He admires the profound understanding of Loisy for the religious life, free from the materialism of both rightists and leftists, from both the ultramontane cesarism and the idealist anarchy.[1] Blondel agrees with Loisy that the Church was at each moment of its existence what it needed to be in order to remain faithful to the Gospel, even without realizing it explicitly. He recognizes very well that Loisy limited himself exclusively to the historical viewpoint. But there is one slight disagreement: he has the vague impression that Loisy hides an underlying christology. This impression, which became Blondel's main objection against Loisy, was not original with him as the compiler of CCM seems to imply, but was first expressed by Laberthonnière in his letter to Blondel five days earlier, on November 20. Would it not be preferable, Blondel wrote, if

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[1] Loisy, Tyrrell et Bremond, pp. 5-6.

[2] (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1901). The first chapter of La religion d'Israel, published earlier in RCF, 24 (1900), 337-363, had been condemned by Cardinal Richard the following week: "Cet article est en contradiction avec la Constitution Dei Filius promulguée dans le Concile du Vatican; il est pareillement en contradiction avec les règles données par le Souverain Pontife Léon XIII pour l'interprétation des Livres de la Sainte Ecriture dans l'Encyclique Providentissimus Deus. Nous en interdisons la publication dans la Revue du Clergé français" (RCF, 24 (1900), 449). Right after this condemnation, archbishop Mignot went to see Cardinal Richard and asked him some explanation. He wrote his findings to Loisy on January 13, 1901: "Evidemment le Cardinal a été circonvenu. Son explication n'atténue pas son acte! S'il ne visait pas l'article, pourquoi le condamner? S'il craignait pour votre foi, il était tout simple de vous avertir." Mignot quoted also the critical judgment expressed by Batiffol on Loisy: "Ces erreurs qui

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portent sur la méthode théologique et sur le traité de la foi ont été analysées et combattues en plusieurs cours de notre faculté de théologie; je m'honore d'être en parfaite unanimité avec mes professeurs.... Il y va de savoir si nous, théologiens officiels du clergé de France, nous nous laisserons déclarer en faillite" (LOI, 27).

[1] In his letter of November 20, Laberthonnière spoke of freedom from the Protestant anarchy and the ultramontane authoritarianism. A careful study of Blondel's correspondence and published writings illustrates how he made his own what was written to him.

Loisy said that the expressions of Jesus did not indicate any ulterior developments, rather than Jesus' thought was stranger to such a conception? In conclusion, Blondel expects much from Loisy's book: for the future of the Church, for the reconciliation of the separated churches, for the growth of celestial unity, Loisy has sown a seed of immortal fecundity (LOI, 26).

On November 28, still sick, Blondel wrote to Wehrlé that he hopes to study Loisy's books when he feels better (BV, 110). On December 1, he wrote to Laberthonnière: "J'ai achevé l'abbé Loisy: c'est bien ce que vous dites. Je commence ses Etudes évangeliques" (LAB, 133). Wehrlé wrote a long letter to Blondel on December 5:

> En ce moment je suis attelé à lire tout ce que j'ai pu me procurer de vieux et de neuf sur l'abbé Loisy. J'ai achevé tout à l'heure L'Evangile et L'Eglise. Il faut lire cela avant tout. C'est, dans l'ordre strictement religieux, un ouvrage d'une portée incalculable à mon humble avis. Je l'admire, je le loue, je le préconise sans réserve. Il trace avec vous le programme de l'avenir. Le plan de rénovation exégétique et théologique se fera sur votre programme à vous deux. Pour des raisons différentes vous n'avez pas cette oeuvre à faire, mais vous la préparez et vous la rendez possible. Je dois voir l'abbé Loisy mardi à Bellevue. Voilà pourquoi je me documente. J'ai aussi les Etudes évangéliques. Je suis heureux que vous alliez à lui. Vous pouvez lui faire du bien, et la lecture de son livre peut vous aider beaucoup pour le vôtre. Il a un tempérament d'historien qui lui donne à un degré supérieur le sens et l'intelligence des choses concrètes (CCM, 48).

In his enthusiasm for the work of Loisy and Blondel, Wehrlé sees them as the protagonists of a major program of renovation within the Church, in exegesis, theology, and philosophy:

Blondel has much to gain from Loisy's historical positivism.[1]

On December 10, Blondel wrote to Wehrlé: "J'ai lu L'Evangile et L'Eglise. J'en ai écrit à M. Loisy. Plusieurs des points que je voulais toucher, que je toucherai s'il plait à Dieu, sont traités là, et en termes presque identiques à ceux que j'ai employés dans mes notes préparatoires" (CCM, 49). Blondel agreed with Loisy on the development of the Church and the only objection which he raised timidly is the following one. Because of his purely historical approach, Loisy seems to subject Christ to the local and temporal contingencies: "Il déclare que tel développement ultérieur était étranger à sa pensée, alors qu'il suffirait de dire qu'il restait étranger à ses expressions." If Loisy does not reserve the possibility of a fuller explanation transcendent to the phenomena, he would risk eliminating absolutely what he did not treat for purposes of methodology: "Je crains que plusieurs lecteurs soupçonnent une Christologie occulte chez l'abbé Loisy, une Christologie qui laisserait le Christ lui-même ignorant, comme L'Eglise, de ce qu'il prépare et de ce qu'il récoltera" (CCM, 49).

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[1] One section of this letter was published in CCM, 48; another in BV, 81.

Blondel can be excused, because of the unfavorable conditions of his first reading, of having overlooked what Loisy had written:

> On ne s'est nullement proposé d'écrire l'apologie du catholicisme et du dogme traditionnel. Si l'on avait eu cette intention, le présent travail serait très défectueux et incomplet, notamment en ce qui regarde la divinité du Christ et l'authorité de l'Eglise. On n'entend pas démontrer ici la vérité de l'Evangile ni celle du christianisme catholique, mais on essaie seulement d'analyser et de définir le rapport qui les unit dans l'histoire. Le lecteur de bonne foi ne s'y trompera pas (EE, vii).

Blondel was negligent, however, for not correcting his false impression, derived from his first reading, and on which he based all his objections to Loisy.

On December 9, Wehrlé went to Bellevue to meet Loisy for the first time. He thanked Blondel for having pointed to the flaw in Loisy's methodology. Such suspicion had not struck Wehrlé at his first reading; he wants now to reread Loisy's remarkable study which stems from an admirable Catholic consciousness and jot down every passage which could justify Blondel's timid reserve; he hopes then to discuss those passages with the author himself. On his first visit, as he was not alone, he could not ask too many questions. He admired the attitude of Loisy: "J'ai admiré et goûté l'homme et le prêtre: l'homme modeste, droit, désintéressé, maître de lui et indulgent aux autres. Le prêtre vraiment évangélique et marqué de la vraie empreinte de Jésus-Christ, celle de la Croix. Il a un souffle de vie dans un corps misérable et malade. Il ne tient debout que par des prodiges d'énergie et d'hygiéne" (CCM, 50). The parish priest of Bellevue confirmed Wehrlé's impression: Loisy is regarded as "un saint autant que comme un savant hors de pair ... son dernier livre révélait un Père de l'Eglise." Wehrlé decided to visit again Loisy; this time he hoped to be alone. He concludes his letter with some observations on the campaign of calumny and persecution that is being waged against Loisy: "La tactique est de faire de M. Loisy 'l'hérétique,' seul bouc émissaire des péchés d'Israel. Pauvre homme! Il a bien souffert ... Il serait mort de faim sans le secours efficace de son ami Thureau-Dangin" (CCM, 51).[1]

In the same letter, Wehrlé goes on to discuss Blondel's efforts to appeal to non-believers:

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[1] The campaign of calumny and persecution was launched by the "integrists" and the members of L'Action française against those who were suspect of any sympathy for democracy, socialism, modern philosophy, and critical exegesis. Blondel, Dabry, Hébert, Houtin, Laberthonnière, Lacroix, Lagrange, Loisy, Tyrrell, and others were constantly vilified and slandered. Of all these, Loisy suffered the most. His memory is still a sinister specter in the mind of the average Roman Catholic who has heard of his name. In a doctoral dissertation at the Gregorianum University in Rome, over ten years ago, Loisy was called "L'hydre venimeuse" (L. da Veiga Coutinho, Tradition et Histoire dans la controverse moderniste (Rome: Gregorianum, 1954), p. 19.

> Votre action ne peut les atteindre qu'après avoir touché l'Eglise, ébranlé l'ancienne mentalité des croyants et contribué à déterminer un renouvellement général de l'esprit et de la science catholiques. Vous ne pourriez ni proprement concevoir, ni surtout afficher la prétention de réformer L'Eglise. C'est cependant ce à quoi vous travaillez en réalité et ce à quoi il nous faudra d'abord aboutir. La transformation des croyants est la condition préalable et absolue de la conversion des incroyants. Le renouvellement de la doctrine en des formes adaptées à l'esprit moderne et contemporain--renouvellement qui n'a jamais eu lieu depuis le XIIIe siècle servira de point d'appui à l'application ultérieure de votre méthode, devenue efficace par l'évolution qu'elle aura déterminée au-dedans avant de réagir au dehors (Unpublished section of the letter in AB).

This section is very important for the information it provides on the intentions of Blondel and his friends. They were all working for a new reformation within the Church, not a reformation of the Church as such, but a reformation of structures within the Church. While the Church as such remained the "untouchable," there were ways of conceiving what needed reformation. The doctrine itself needed a renewal in forms more adapted to contemporary mentality, a renewal that had never taken place since the thirteenth century, according to Wehrlé.[1] Wehrlé deplores then the infection of ideological idolatry within the Church, the identification of reality with the symbol, of the object of faith with dogmatic formulations. In his apostasy, Marcel Hébert might be considered a victim of that idolatry, since he reduced the personality of God to the level of a pure symbol.[1]

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[1] There is a complete ignorance of the Protestant Reformation.

Blondel answered Wehrlé on December 15. He realizes now the major problems of the dominant apologetics. First of all, the proponents of an exclusively intellectualist apologetics need themselves to be converted to a Christian mentality. Moreover, many of the so-called orthodox theologians appear to Blondel to be really heterodox, verging on idolatry, in their naive realism, in their subordination of everything to the institutional and intellectual structures of the Church, while it is the Christian life which is the most important. Concerning Loisy, he wants to console him in his afflictions. He does not want to pain Loisy by his suspicions concerning the latter's implicit christology, but he fears a reduction of Christ's divine consciousness within the limits of a human consciousness. The renewal of the Church presupposes a complete overhaul in the various realms of philosophy, exegesis, history, politics, and sociology (Partly published letter in CCM, 51).

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[1] CCM, 328-329; see M. Hébert, "La dernière idole: Etude sur la personnalité divine," RMM, 10 (1902), 397-408. As a matter of fact, Hébert liberated himself from such an idolatry. For him, to speak of the personality of God is an anthropomorphism; to confuse this anthropomorphic symbol for the reality of God is the "idolatry" which he rejects. He prefers to leave God in his mystery and to call an anthropomorphic symbol truly what it is, just a symbol.

For a favorable book review of Houtin's La question biblique, l'abbé Jean-Marie Grosjean, an enthusiastic disciple of Blondel and Loisy, was censured by his bishop, the Cardinal Perraud, on December 12. Four days later, Blondel wrote him a letter of consolation, inviting him to a serenity superior to that of Socrates and Spinoza, since he is a priest of Jesus Christ. There is merit and virtue in submitting to the authorities, wrote Blondel, even though one is convinced of knowing better than they. Houtin's book was necessary. It would be wrong, however, to continue pouring vinegar into the wounds left open by a surgeon: the crime of Cham should not be repeated (Partly published letter in BV, 239).

On December 18, Mgr Pierre Batiffol, rector of the Institut Catholique of Toulouse, wrote a memoir which he sent to Rome in which he asked for a clarification of the Catholic principles for biblical exegesis.[1] Batiffol suggested: (1) the respect for the persons involved in the crisis; (2) no judgment on historical and literary facts still open to modern criticism; (3) the setting up of limits to Catholics engaged in the modern critical sciences, limits beyond which one cannot remain a Catholic: "Si on use de la critique et de la raison comme du doute méthodique, c'est par hypothèse et non absolument."[1]

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[1] This memoir was made public by M. J. Lagrange in M. Loisy et le modernisme (Juvisy: Cerf, 1932), pp. 85-86; see HDC, 372-373.

On December 20, Wehrlé was not yet convinced of Blondel's suspicions concerning Loisy's implicit christology (CCM, 50). On December 21, Laberthonnière reported to Blondel his visit to Loisy who seems to understand their objections against his presumed christology and hopes to clarify that point in a subsequent edition. On the other hand, Laberthonnière recognized that the christology most commonly taught in Catholic schools leans heavily towards docetism (BL, 155-156). Two days later, Blondel answered, sadly noting the conflict Perraud-Grosjean. On December 28, Mourret congratulated Blondel for his "pulverisation" of Gayraud in articles which Blondel wrote under the borrowed name of Mallet; Mourret informed Blondel also of the unorthodox ideas in L'Evangile et L'Eglise (CCM, 158).

On January 1, 1903, Gayraud began in L'Univers a series of five articles against those who accept the modern critical methods, in particular against Loisy (HDC, 125-129).[1] In response to a letter of Loisy announcing good news from Rome, archbishop Mignot wrote him on January 1: "Il y a évidemment de bons amis qui auront pesé sur le Souverain Pontife. Nous en reparlerons. Ce billet a pour but de vous prier de faire paraître une seconde édition de L'Evangile...avec des notes" (LOI, 27). On January 2, Blondel told Wehrlé that his "pulverisation" of Gayraud was not sufficient since he left him a "tooth" to attack Loisy (MMd,22).

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[1] The recent publications, Documents sur l'histoire du modernisme, give ample evidence of Batiffol's readiness to subject his critical studies to the dominant opinions within the Church. Unfortunately for him, he was dismissed abruptly from his rectorship in 1908, without any explanations, in a purging campaign against all those who were suspect of Modernism. Batiffol had shown earlier some sympathies for Loisy until the latter's reputation for orthodoxy declined. See HDC, 364-392; CCM, 297-316.

In response to a request of Bremond, Blondel wrote on January 4 his impressions on L'Evangile et L'Eglise. Loisy developed several ideas with which Blondel is sympathetic, in particular, that of an organic development of doctrine. On the other hand, Blondel raised some methodological difficulties against Loisy: (1) the systematic separation of the historical perspective from the metaphysical and the theological; (2) the consequent reduction of Christ's consciousness of divinity to the limits of human consciousness. Blondel proposed to develop his "Panchristisme," an orthodox corrective for Spinoza's "pantheism," in opposition to Loisy's supposed evacuation of christology (CCM, 52-53; CL, 134-135). The same day, Blondel communicated to Mourret his reflections on Loisy's book. He fears an evacuation of traditional christology which would make Christ as unconscious as the Church:

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[1] On December 8, Mourret consoled Blondel concerning the accusations of Gayraud who, in a series of articles, was defending a literal interpretation of Thomism against all modern philosophers. Between September 26, 1901, and May 31, 1902, nineteen letters were exchanged between Gayraud and Blondel, the latter using a friend of Aix, l'abbé Mallet, as his intermediary without the knowledge of Gayraud. (See AP, 92ff.; CCM, 155 and HDC, 549 mention only fourteen letters. The originals of these nineteen letters have not yet been found in the archives of Blondel, but they have been copied in MMd, 6). Saint-Jean summarized this controversial correspondence between what he calls, "un intellectualisme notionaliste et un intellectualisme existentialiste, entre une philosophie du concept et une philosophie de la vie, entre une apologétique de la démonstration et une apologétique de la conversion" (AP, 98).

> J'avais lu avec le plus poignant intérêt L'Evangile et L'Eglise, que M. Loisy m'avait lui-même offert. Et en admirant ce sens si riche, si fin, si concret des contingences historiques, j'avoue que j'ai partout éprouvé un malaise dont je résume la cause en ces deux propositions: position intenable de l'historien qui prétend demeurer, en cette matière, au seul point de vue historique; tendance inadmissible à étendre à la personne du Christ la façon inconsciente ou imprévue de procéder et d'évoluer qui est souvent celle de l'Eglise (CCM, 53).

On January 4, Wehrlé sent to Blondel two long documents in which he expressed his own views on christology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. He interpreted Loisy's views as in agreement with traditional positions, and even tried to justify Loisy's most extreme positions. He has been visiting Loisy practically every day. He appeals to Blondel to come to Loisy's defense:

> Parce qu'en France il est notre seul savant digne de ce nom en ces matières exégétiques; parce que rien jusqu'à présent dans sa vie n'autorise à croire qu'il ne partage pas en plénitude la foi de l'Eglise catholique; parce que, en perpétuel contact avec la science indépendante

> et protestante, il est amené à adopter un langage qui nous déconcerte, mais où nous ne devons pas nous hâter d'apercevoir une signification hétérodoxe; parce que enfin et surtout, si sa Christologie est dénoncée comme fausse et condamnée, un discredit bien regrettable sera jeté sur l'ensemble de son oeuvre.[1]

According to Wehrlé, the condemnation of Loisy would crush the "avant-garde scientifique" in the Church, already suspect _a priori_, and precipitate the mass of the clergy, with a violent passion, in a life of medieval piety, "qu'on appellerait plus proprement lunaire, obstinément fermée à tous les échos du dehors, à tout le mouvement des esprits contemporains" (_MMd_, 22). Like a jealous tigress guarding her young, the clergy watches over the centuries-old deposit of faith. In the contemporary situation, observed Wehrlé, this ostrich-like reaction has been going on for more than two hundred years.

On the evening of January 4, Wehrlé sent a second letter to Blondel in which he spoke of the _thought_ of Jesus as the equation between the _interior content_ and the _formulation_ of his exterior teaching. Thus, it is possible to distinguish: (1) the _immediate_ meaning of Jesus' teaching, perceptible to the Jews and the subject of historical inquiry; and (2) the more _profound_ and universal meaning of Jesus' teaching "discovered" by the Spirit acting directly on souls, a matter for theological speculation on the divine and invisible science of Christ: "La question d'analyse historique concrète et la question de définition théologique abstraite sont deux choses absolument distinctes et parfaitement, légitimement séparables. Voilà comment je justifie la méthode, l'attitude, le langage de l'abbé Loisy." With the quotation, "Christ yesterday, today, and forever," Wehrlé distinguished three states in Christ: (1) Christ yesterday in a flesh forever abolished by death; (2) Christ today in the viaticum in which he is the companion of our exile; (3) Christ who is eternally a parte post in the kingdom of heaven which he is preparing for us. The Jewish Christ exists no more; the eucharistic Christ is no more once the eucharistic species have been consumed. Only the resurrected and glorious Christ remains; to find him, one must search not in Judaea, but in all those who, still in their mortal condition, commune with the immortal Christ who reigns with the Father in heaven. Loisy proclaimed this permanent and immanent action of Christ in the Church. As for the mortal Christ, he belongs to history. Finally, Wehrlé prays for a miracle which could save Loisy from a condemnation by the Church; otherwise, the ecclesiastical censure would prove God's displeasure: "Si l'abbé Loisy a des intentions pures, une foi personnelle agréable à Dieu, si son oeuvre est pour le bien de l'Eglise, Dieu fera le miracle de le sauver de la censure. Sinon, nous le plaindrons, nous nous soumettrons à l'Eglise et nous retiendrons de son oeuvre les germes sains qui lèveront dans les moissons futures" (Unpublished in AB).

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[1] Only three paragraphs of the first document was published in _CCM_, 54. Both _CCM_, 53, and _HDC_, 517 date the second of Wehrlé's documents on January 5; in reality, it was written on the evening of January 4, and followed the next day by a very short note.

In his short note to Blondel on January 5, Wehrlé made a parallel between the relation of the Church to the realized kingdom of heaven, and the relation of the mortal humanity of Christ to his glorified humanity in heaven. There is a change of condition, but an identity in being and a continuity of life (Unpublished in AB).

On January 6, Blondel wrote a long response to Wehrlé. He favors a rejection of docetism predominant in theological manuals which sublimates the humanity of Jesus Christ, and grants to Wehrlé that the human psychology of Christ has not yet been scientifically studied. Concerning the christology of Loisy, three aspects need consideration: (1) the problem itself; (2) the persons involved; (3) the solution of the problem. Concerning the existence of the problem, Blondel agrees with Loisy and Wehrlé. The problem of Deus-Homo, -- the psychological and metaphysical difficulties which it entails, -- has not yet been subjected to the critical methods of either experimental psychology or scientific history. If he raised any objections against Loisy in an earlier letter, it was as "l'avocat du diable," to test the validity of his methodology. He wants, nevertheless, to respect the character, faith, and intentions of Loisy. Concerning the persons involved in the crisis, he would willingly and publicly take Loisy's defense if he did not risk compromising himself, "s'il ne fallait, hélas, éviter de nous compromettre mutuellement en nous solidarisant ostensiblement" (The last four words were not published in *CCM*, 55). Concerning the solution of the problem, Blondel does not grant to Wehrlé an *extensive* progress in the consciousness of Christ which would subject him to the limitations of human knowledge; he would speak rather of an *intensive* growth and penetration of the Divinity in the Humanity of Christ.

The main stumbling block for Blondel is a question of methodology which entails a divergence in doctrine. Blondel rejects the critical approach of both Loisy and archbishop Mignot which Wehrlé is inclined to accept. Of Mignot, he quotes the following passage: "Ne quittons pas le *terrain positif de l'histoire* pour le *rêve métaphysique*. Nos contemporains ne se fient qu'aux faits. Partons donc des faits seuls; la science exégétique peut s'établir sur son propre terrain; *notre foi est une question de fait historique* (*CCM*, 56; the underlining is mine). For a philosopher such as Blondel, the preference of positive history to metaphysics pains him. For Loisy, biblical theology does not come before, but after a criticism of the text. While Loisy distinguished between theology and history, the transcendent and the sensible, Blondel understands this distinction as if one were sealed hermetically from the other. While Loisy holds that the divine in Jesus is not an object for historical and critical observation, Blondel thinks that such a methodology is perilous and illegitimate for two reasons: either Loisy limits himself to the "sensible," the "natural," the "historical"; consequently, he limits Christ to what is human and temporal and fails to discover the divine; or else he pretends to pass directly from facts to theology. Since the pure facts cannot give the supernatural, he is imprisoned in naturalism. Consequently, sacred exegesis and sacred history would be only an arbitrary appendix to the natural determinism of ordinary history. We can see that for Blondel, there are two kinds of history and two kinds of exegesis: natural history is limited to the description of events and facts according to their natural determinism by reason alone; sacred history describes divine facts which are perceptible by faith. Blondel was dreaming for history the same kind of objectivity and positivity as that of the other natural sciences.

These difficulties have been treated in a chapter of Blondel's manuscript on "L'apologétique et l'esprit chrétien." Blondel distinguished there two erroneous extremes, the "théologite" and the "criticite" which only his method of immanence could correct and reconcile. Gayraud would be a victim of "théologite." The facts are absorbed in a preconceived theology. Even though Gayraud writes that "notre foi est une question de fait historique," that it is possible to observe the supernatural as one can observe the sun, he presupposes the existence of faith. On the other hand, archbishop Mignot and Loisy would be victims of "criticite." When they write that "notre foi est une question de fait historique," they really mean to observe of the supernatural only what is natural, contingent, and human. Consequently, they labor under an illusion, for "jamais l'histoire pure ne nous fournira rien du dogme." That is to say, it is impossible to pass directly either from dogma to facts, or vice versa, from facts to dogma. Some intermediary stage is necessary. This view, writes Blondel, is in agreement with the councils, the popes, in particular with Leo XIII: the Bible cannot be treated exclusively by the methods of scientific exegesis; it cannot become the object of a science independent of the Magisterium.

On the other hand, the method of immanence can obviate these two difficulties. It obviates the pseudo-theology of those who pretend to observe empirically what is divine and to conclude to the supernatural elements in the Bible by a purely extrinsic determination without any internal criticism.

It obviates also the perilous isolation of an adogmatic exegesis which reduces supernatural revelation to natural evidence.

Blondel grants that Loisy has not been a victim to the second extreme because he is a philosopher, a theologian, "un intérieur," who animates his biblical science with an implicit Catholic mind; but he has not made the explicit theory for the transition from ordinary history to sacred history, from exegesis to faith. After all, by what right can one discover an eternal Christ under the traits of the temporal Christ, if not by the right of faith? Consequently, the story of Christ is not exhausted by purely historical explanations, exegesis, and autonomous criticism.

Even ordinary history is never autonomous and separated from other sciences when it deals with human affairs; it is essentially bound to moral, metaphysical, and religious problems. Blondel raised a first major objection against a complete separation of history from dogma and theology. The second objection results from the first. If what is specifically theological and supernatural is not a matter of historical and critical observation, how will it be possible to discover an invisible Christ since the visible Christ answers all the questions? Once again, the double necessity of the method of immanence appears: "(1) faire ressortir l'insuffisance de tout l'appareil extérieur des faits; (2) nous faire pénétrer dans l'intimité vivifiante du divin et de l'humain" (GCM, 59).

Blondel protests against any attempt to summarize Christianity in one "essence": "Car le christianisme est fait moins pour être pensé dans l'unité d'une notion, que pour être aimé et vécu dans la multiforme richesse de son infinie et incessante nouveauté." The notion of the "kingdom" is extrinsic, parabolic, and simply a means to the end which is the deification of man, his incarnation in the body of Deus-Homo. The doctrine of the Kingdom and the Parousia appear to Blondel as an illusion of the apostolic age. This expectation of a proximate eschatology is an illusion: the world seems to end with the death of each of us. In the New Testament, there is such a variety of apparently contradictory statements that it would be arbitrary to reduce Jesus' teaching to a unique theory, to a systematic simplification, to a human or philosophic synthesis. Both Harnack and Loisy have been victims of this scholastic intellectualism.

Concerning the psychology of Christ, Blondel maintains only one person with two natures, only one consciousness with two sciences: "aliter per carnem, aliter per divinitatem idem eadem cognoscens," wrote St. Bernard. To grant only one consciousness to Christ is a formidable problem which seems contradicted by several scriptural texts; Blondel does not want to limit Jesus' consciousness to that of an average man. Jesus did not play a comedy by mimicking the average man's ignorance; he accommodated himself simply to his disciples. How is it possible to avoid the submergence of Jesus' human science in the ocean of the science of the Word? Blondel proposes the solution in his "Panchristisme". Jesus is truly man and truly God because he embraces all human consciousness and unconsciousness: "Il réalise la perpétuelle adéquation de ce qui, chez nous tous, demeure provisoirement inadéquat entre notre conscience et notre être" (CCM, 61). Jesus conforms himself to all our miseries and ways of speaking: "Il est l'Homme, au point que si nous ne sommes que par lui, in quo omnia constant, il n'est homme que par nous et pour nous." This is no longer the phanthom of docetism: "C'est l'homme de tous les hommes, c'est moi absolument, et c'est chacun de nous intimement, plus en chacun que chacun ne sait être en soi" (CCM, 61).

Blondel rejects definitely Wehrlé's distinction of three Christs, yesterday, today, and forever. The glorified body of Christ is the same as the suffering body, and the Humanity surviving in heaven in the embrace of the Divinity, without any absorption or sublimation, is the same one realized, nourished, and solidified by the truth of all the human sufferings, efforts, and actions. The Church is not only the antechamber or the "Kingdom"; it is the body of the Head, the spouse of Christ: dimidium Christi.

In a postscript, Blondel refuses to accept the reduction of the human consciousness of Jesus on earth to the normal development of an average man any more than to the consciousness of the glorified souls in heaven. He rejects also the differentiation between the mortal, the eucharistic, and the glorified body of Christ. These differences, he writes, are valid quoad nos only, not in se.

Blondel continues: we, who have reached the age of maturity, we, the adults of Christianity, must transpose the illusion of an immediate Parousia to the level of moral and spiritual realities and purify the Church from the Judaic conceptions of the Kingdom, from the ever reviving leaven of the pharisees. Instead of defending ecclesiastical institutions, we should perpetuate the spirit of detachment. The problem of the Catholics in France is their illusory ambition of creating their kingdom on earth: "Toujours Jésus se dérobera (et on le voit bien) quand les hommes, fût-ce des Jésuites ou des Assomptionistes, voudront en faire un roi de ce monde" (The reference to the Jesuits and Assumptionists was omitted in CCM, 62).

In sum, there is: (1) a basic methodological question: how and why it is possible to go from history to dogma? (2) the eschatological viewpoint of the Kingdom is neither unique, nor central to the Gospel; (3) the psychology of Deus-Homo cannot be established on a temporal basis as if time were an absolute. Blondel cannot accept the slightest obscurity within the human consciousness of the Incarnate Word without compromising the divinity of his unique person; the human characteristics of Christ are not to be found in a minimization, but in a maximization of his knowledge, in the universalization of his philanthropia.

On January 11, Blondel wrote to his former student, Augustin Léger, then teaching in Canada. Concerning the last two books of Loisy, Blondel has two fundamental objections:

> D'abord, je ne puis admettre l'autarkeia du point de vue historique, car si on veut, restant sur le seul terrain des faits, se satisfaire par un système clos et par une explication tout historique, jamais, du déterminisme de l'histoire, on ne passera au métaphysique ni au théologique; implicitement ou explicitement, on arrivera à supprimer le surnaturel; même s'il y est, les faits ne le donnent pas, en tant que tels, à l'historien. De plus, je ne puis admettre que la conscience du Christ semble limitée aux préoccupations eschatologiques de la Parousie imminente. A plus forte raison, je ne suivrais pas l'abbé Loisy (mais ce point reste enigmatique) s'il insinuait que la conscience humaine de l'Homme-Dieu demeure inadéquate à Sa propre réalité, soumise au mode obscur et instinctif de l'Eglise elle-même, qui agit par inspiration sans prévoir la portée lointaine de ses décisions (CCM, 63).

On the same day, Blondel wrote to Hügel a summary of his objections against Loisy. First, on the question of methodology, Blondel cannot admit the autarkeia of the historical viewpoint which he attributes, according to his inadequate knowledge of the history of philosophy, to the peripatetic and scholastic notion of hermetically separated sciences. If the historian limits himself to natural explanations, how will he ever reach dogma, metaphysics, and theology? In harmony with both modern science and revelation, biblical exegesis should never be exhaustive. Secondly, if Harnack erred and remained a scholastic in his search for an idealistic quintessence of Christianity, Loisy also erred in searching for a central explanation; for in Christianity, there is not so much a unity of concept to be thought out, as there is an inexhaustible wealth and variety of action to be lived. Thirdly, Blondel cannot admit that Christ limited his thought to a proximate Parousia. Finally, he does not want to consider the human consciousness of Deus-Homo as inadequate to his own divine being, just as the consciousness of the Church is inadequate when it acts according to an obscure and instinctive fashion, by inspiration, and without realizing the ultimate bearing of its decisions. Surely, writes Blondel, it is hard to escape all forms of docetism. He claims that he can escape this danger, not by admitting two consciousnesses in the unique person of Christ, but by incorporating in his divine consciousness the consciousness of all our unconsciousnesses, by making of Jesus the Man of all men, the explicit of everything implicit. The illusion of a proximate Parousia was a means to foster the detachment of the first Christian generation. The fourth Gospel would be an original meditation and a symbolic translation of the excessive materialization of Jesus' teaching in the Synoptics (*CCM*, 63-65).

Again, on January 11, Wehrlé answered Blondel in a long letter of gratitude. He has been stopped on the edge of an abyss: "Oui, mes insinuations allaient droit à préparer l'erreur monstrueuse, où j'ai failli tomber, que déjà je me formulais presque intérieurement, d'un dédoublement de la conscience du Christ, d'une double prise de possession de Lui-même par une double réfl[illegible] Lui: une réflexion divine, une réflexion hu[illegible] fait, sur ce point, la lumière rationnelle [illegible]a, je vous serai reconnaissant, plus que [illegible] toute ma vie" (Unpublished letter in *AB*) [illegible]o Wehrlé, the whole of Scripture and Christian mysticism testify to Blondel's "Panchristisme." But Wehrlé protests against Blondel's casual dismissal of the word "kingdom" which is not the invention of Loisy, but comes from Jesus himself. The *idea* and the *reality* of the kingdom is the *alpha* and *omega* of the religious history of the world, of the work of God among us. The kingdom is a reality, while the mystical body is rather a symbol useful to explain the proper and unique nature of the kingdom. The notion of the kingdom entered in theology as the doctrine of election and predestination. The Gospel and Blondel's philosophy do not appear to agree at first sight on this point. Wehrlé, as a generation. The fourth Gospel would be an original meditation and a symbolic translation of the excessive materialization of Jesus' teaching in the Synoptics (CCM, 63-65).

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In a long letter of January 14, Blondel admired Wehrlé's docility to accept his objections and reproached him for an undue sense of guilt. After all, their discussions should be free and open. Wehrlé's christological cosmogenesis recovers what Blondel has begun to develop, the whole of creation postulates the Emmanuel. Man subsists only in relation to the Incarnate Word. There is an objective Immanence just as there is a subjective Immanence and both of them are based on the realism of the Subject-Object which is Deus-Homo, Verbum-caro. There is no question of parallelism, but of solidarity. It is not only in ethics and deontology, but in ontology that the determinism of phenomena is suspended to the reality, infinitely gratuitous in its first creative initiative, infinitely obedient in the execution of the divine design of Christ, of the Primogenitus omnis creaturae, in quo omnia constant. In L'Action, Blondel attempted an implicit justification of the Franciscan thesis. The alpha and omega of creation is the creative and Incarnate Word.[1]

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[1] The same views were later developed by Teilhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man, tr. B.Wall (New York: Harper, 1959). See also, Blondel et Teilhard de Chardin: Correspondance commentée par H. de Lubac (Paris: Beauchesne, 1965).

Thus, matter and mind subsist through the Emmanuel; Deus-Homo subsists by the incorporation and the assumption of the universe. Creation is possible only by the Incarnation, and vice versa, Incarnation is possible only by Creation. There is in the consciousness of Christ an extra-divine element, that is, the real presence of created beings as such, a sympathy for innumerable sensibilities which goes as far as the personal Passion; in short, something that even God can acquire or lose, such as the voluntary love of the elect and the voluntary hatred of the damned. The elimination of a human consciousness from Christ should not result in any kind of docetism and impassibility. Here is to be found the psychological, metaphysical, and ascetical solution of the question of immanence. We cannot know and love Jesus Christ such as he is in himself without realizing Him in ourselves, since He is by us just as we are by Him, since to know Him is to love, to will, to realize within ourselves all the other men, the other beings, and the whole created order. Concerning the eschatological ideas in Jesus' teaching, Blondel suggested a corrective for Loisy's interpretation in his last letter to Hügel. He prefers to regard the fourth Gospel as a reaction against the partial and literal character of the Synoptics. Concerning the problem of predestination which Wehrlé regards as central to theology, Blondel views it as a manifestation of theological intellectualism, as some kind of contemporary neo-Jansenism, because it confuses problems which are absolutely distinct and independent.

Former Christians did not share the universal views of contemporary Christians. They accepted easily the election of a small nation, the damnation of the masses, of pagans, and of unbaptized children. They understood Catholicity within the extrinsic and misleading frames of geography and history. Redemption was limited to those who received an accidental and explicit knowledge of revelation. God was conceived as an autocrat; man, as a subject without any civil personality, a slave to all the fantasies of his master. Consequently, Blondel refuses to see in predestination a central idea of Catholic theology; in his eyes, it is a manifestation of the narrowness of the human heart, the survival of Judaism, an aberration of childish intellectualism, the common source of all our present woes, of the stagnation and impoverishment of Catholic life. The reason for such aberrations is due to the confusion of redemption with revelation and the limitation of redemption to those explicitly informed of revelation. Blondel prefers the idea of a universal redemption ontologically indispensable for salvation and gratuitously applied to all men of good will, even without any explicit revelation manifested to them. While Wehrlé began with the massa perditionis from which God saves a few, Blondel began with the superabundantia amoris gratuiti to which all are called, but not all are faithful. Blondel would exaggerate the generosity of God rather than his severity (Unpublished letter in AB).

On January 19, Wehrlé drew limits to Blondel's thesis of a universal redemption and a limited revelation: "En soutenant la thèse de la vertu réelle et efficacement opérante du mystère rédempteur, indépendante de la connaissance extérieure et explicite de la révélation, il faut: (1) ne jamais paraître ébranler la nécessité de l'Eglise, de son enseignement et de l'adhésion à son enseignement; (2) ne pas sembler admettre le salut par la bonne foi, mais toujours ramener le salut à la foi justifiante, si implicite, si réduite qu'on la suppose comme teneur" (CCM, 255-256).

As soon as L'Evangile et L'Eglise was published, Cardinal Richard of Paris requested Joseph Brucker, s.j., director of Les Etudes, to make a report. Brought to the diocesan office on December 31, 1902, the report did not reach the Cardinal before January 9; it was sent immediately to six theologians to prepare the text of the condemnation. The Cardinal signed it on Saturday, January 17, and published it in La Croix, on January 19 (AL, 110; 113; HDC, 136).

The next day, Blondel gave his impressions to Wehrlé: "C'est douloureux, et pour des raisons contraires. Mais puisque la Commission romaine siège, puisque, paraît-il, l'abbé Loisy est mandé lui-même à Rome, ne pouvait-on surseoir? Et puis, défendre de lire un livre que tous les curieux, les friands ont lu déjà, cela ne date-t-il pas du temps où les livres étaient rares, les communications lentes, les critiques et les discussions restreintes, et les esprits moins avertis?" The anticlericals in France cannot but find satisfaction in such draconiam measures:

> Ah, qu'il eût été meilleur, ce semble, au lieu de recourir à une mesure d'ostracisme, de publier une instruction sur les interprétations qu'on ne peut admettre et sur celles qu'on doit accepter. Vérité, charité, habileté, tout, ce me semble, eût été sauf. Mais que voulez-vous que je réponde à l'un de mes collègues qui m'objecte: 'La liberté de la recherche scientifique est chimérique dans l'Eglise parce que les incompétents y ont autorité.' Oui, mais l'Esprit Saint se sert de tout, pour aboutir à ses fins; et je me console en pensant que Dieu recueille les âmes que le pharisaisme seul empêche apparemment d'entrer."

Blondel questioned Wehrlé on the wisdom of writing to Loisy. Since the condemnation of Loisy seems to result from the campaign of neoscholastics against the introduction of modern critical methods, Blondel repeats again the outcry of Descartes which he quotes from memory: "Imprimis haec est exterminanda scolastica, etiam inadvertentes non calomniari non possunt" [sic] (Letter partly published in CCM, 65-66).

On January 20, Léonce de Grandmaison published a moderate criticism of L'Evangile et L'Eglise.[1] He believes that Loisy's conception of Christian development is less faithful to that of Newman than it is to the Hegelianism of Edward Caird, in particular to the two principles of absolute rationalism and historical dialectics. Loisy's thesis would be excellent if it were not for the transcendence of Christianity above the other religions and the divinity of Christ. In conclusion, de Grandmaison wrote: "L'Evangile et L'Eglise est le livre d'un homme qui connait à fond le Nouveau Testament et l'immense littérature, surtout la protestante, inspirée par les Evangiles. Mais les idées philosophiques de l'auteur appellent d'expresses réserves, et plus encore sa façon de présenter et de circonscrire la doctrine personnelle du Sauveur. Le Christ qu'on nous présente ici n'est, j'en ai peur, ni celui de la théologie, ni (et, pour un catholique, la première conclusion emporte la seconde) celui de l'histoire" (p. 173). This conclusion, revised by Brücker, in agreement with the Cardinal's censure, expressed the view that for a Catholic, theology can impose certain conclusions to history (see BV, 162).

On January 20, Pierre Batiffol wrote an article aimed directly against both Blondel and Loisy.[2] While Blondel's attitude is said to be an attempt to combine the dogmatic system of Roman Catholicism with the subjectivist attitude of Kant, Loisy's attitude would be an attempt to combine the same dogmatic system with the agnosticism and evolutionism inspired by Spencer (p. 4). In L'Evangile et L'Eglise, according to Batiffol, Loisy views the Church as a living and continuing adaptation and correction of the Gospel; he has transposed Harnack's individualistic reduction to social categories; he has interpreted history in terms of his philosophy of evolution. Loisy's doctrine of Christian development would lead to Sabatier's "faith without belief," to the Undogmatisches Christentum of Dreyer, and to the Spencerian agnosticism of Caird (p. 15). From then on, everyone repeated Batiffol's judgment of Loisy's book: "C'est une mystification" (see HDC, 376).

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[1] See Etudes, 94 (1903), 145-174. Poulat remarks that after Pascendi, de Grandmaison was accused of too many concessions to Loisy in that article; see HDC, 143, note 38.

[2] See BLE, 5 (1903), 3-15; see also HDC, 373-374.

On January 21, Laberthonnière informed Blondel that Cardinal Richard was extremely sick and might not understand all the consequences of his condemnation of Loisy. When this condemnation was transmitted triumphantly by some confreres to Laberthonnière, he was painfully afflicted. His first impression of Loisy's book had been favorable, even though he realized that it was incomplete. Laberthonnière did not believe that it is possible to maintain a neutral attitude in matters of religion. Loisy's attitude seems inconsistent:

at times, he pretends to limit himself to the purely historical and critical viewpoint; at other times, he seems to write as a theologian. This oscillation from one attitude to the other would explain why so many misread him. What pains Laberthonnière is that Loisy's condemnation comes after the articles of Gayraud and seems to confirm them. He plans to write an article to obviate this impression:

> L'idée m'est venue de me faire demander des explications par quelqu'un des jeunes gens que je connais et qui me confierait ses angoisses et son trouble. Je répondrais par une lettre dont j'autoriserais la publication et où, en jugeant l'abbé Loisy, je mettrais les choses au point -- ceci me permettrait d'une façon générale d'indiquer le caractère, la portée et la raison d'être des interventions de l'autorité. Et en même temps j'en profiterais pour cingler en particulier l'abbé Gayraud que je suis las de voir promener sur tout son inintelligence universelle.[1]

Blondel answered on January 23: "Puissiez-vous convertir les historiens à la métaphysique, du moins les amener à la conviction qu'ils ne peuvent en effet demeurer dans la neutrailité philosophique." He recalls his letters to Wehrlé and Hügel in which he summarized his criticism of Loisy. A methodology which limits itself to the pure data of history is erroneous if it pretends either to draw the supernatural from positive facts, or else if it postpones theology until the historical determinism has been sufficiently explained. Both Harnack and Loisy have reduced too much the wealth of teaching in the New Testament. The expectation of a proximate Parousia was simply a transposition of Judaic hopes by the first Christian generation, according to Blondel. He cannot admit any limitations whatever in the consciousness of Christ, even though this might seem to present some risk of docetism (_BL_, 158-159). He concludes: "Il me semble que votre pensée de faire publier une lettre rassérénante est bonne. Il y a tant à dire pour defendre à la fois l'abbé Loisy et l'Autorité (bien que, entre nous, le Cardinal eût pu attendre que Rome se fût prononcée). Il y a tant à dire pour dévoiler ce qui se cache d'odieuse inintelligence et _d'erreur_ _morale_ dans les procédés d'un abbé Gayraud et de ceux qui l'admirent. Vous vous rappelez le mot de Descartes: 'Hoec Scholastica imprimis exterminanda, quia theologi calumniandi artem etiam inscii non exercere non possunt! [sic!] " (_LAB_, 133).

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[1] Only the first paragraph of this letter was published in BL, 156. Laberthonnière published a criticism of the attitude of neutral criticism in "Les études historiques et l'apologétique," APC, 145 (1903), 369-380. Blondel used some of these ideas in History and Dogma.

On January 23, Blondel wrote to Wehrlé: "Prions pour M. Loisy,--pour ses juges,--et aussi pour ses bourreaux, car il en a. Faut-il lui écrire?" (_CCM_, 66). Three days later, Wehrlé answered. In his first reading of _L'Evangile_ _et_ _L'Eglise_, he did not suspect a dichotomy between the scholar and the priest and he presumed orthodoxy instead of searching for heresies. But Mourret dissuaded him from that confident attitude. Blondel raised two major objections against the methodology and the christology of Loisy (BV, 111). Since Loisy has been condemned officially, it is no longer possible for a Catholic to take publicly his defense. Concerning a private letter of Blondel to Loisy, Wehrlé makes this observation:

> Si, de votre silence, l'abbé Loisy pouvait conclure que vous l'abandonnez lâchement à une heure cruelle, je dirais: écrivez-lui, quand ce ne serait que deux mots pour lui dire que vous êtes avec lui dans l'épreuve. Mais, étant donné vos relations, je ne crois pas qu'il y ait danger que votre silence soit interprété de la sorte. D'autre part, au point où en sont les choses, je me demande si nous pouvons lui écrire sans lui donner à entendre que, quelle que soit sa pensée, sa Christologie apparait comme suspecte à des lecteurs intelligents et bienveillants (tel M. Mourret). N'est-ce pas lui faire une peine inutile, et peut-être diminuer sa défense qui sera d'autant plus forte qu'elle procédera d'une conviction moins ébranlée? Et enfin, si on entre en rapports avec lui, peut-on ne pas l'incliner à une soumission éventuelle, qui sauvera du moins ce qui peut être sauvé de son oeuvre scientifique et qui le sauvera lui-même d'une catastrophe irrémédiable? Or, sommes-nous assez libres avec lui et le connaissons-nous assez pour aborder cette question? Enfin, la grosse épreuve n'est pas encore survenue. Qui sait si la condamnation du Cardinal ne sert sa cause à Rome?[1]

In response to a previous letter of Blondel, Albert Lamy wrote on January 27 that he agreed with Blondel's criticism of Loisy. According to Lamy, science cannot be independent for a Catholic. That was the error of Loisy: "Son école et lui, en créant entre la dogmatique et la critique une artificielle et puérile antinomie, ont préparé la crise présente, qui forcément ne se résoudra que contre eux." Too much emphasis on a critical approach to Christianity proves to Lamy a lack of love, a deficiency in faith, and the loss of childlike trust (Partly published letter in CCM, 68).

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[1] CCM, 67.

On January 28, the superior of the Carmelite seminary of the Institut Catholique of Paris, l'abbé Guibert, confided to Wehrlé his personal conviction that Loisy no longer held the Catholic understanding of the divinity of Christ. Shocked by such revelation, Wehrlé wrote immediately to Loisy: "Si c'est vraiment votre christologie que nous donnent les chapîtres du royaume des cieux et du Fils de Dieu, je la crois erronée et incompatibles avec les données theologiques les plus fermes, les plus constantes, les plus immuables de l'Eglise" (CCM, 71; see also HDC, 519-520). Loisy answered on February 2. Why should Wehrlé reject Loisy's christology as erroneous, when none is given in L'Evangile et L'Eglise? "Vous êtes infiniment mieux renseigné que moi sur ma 'christologie.' Il n'y a dans mes deux premiers chapîtres que ce qui apparait à l'historien. Donc pas de christologie. Ma christologie est celle de l'Eglise; mais j'ajouterai que je crois cette christologie susceptible d'explication" (CCM, 72). And Loisy added:

> Il me semble que vous confondez la notion scolastique de la personalité avec la notion moderne et psychologique

> de la personne. Vous affirmez l'unité, et, j'en ai bien peur, la confusion, de la conscience humaine et de la conscience divine par rapport à Jesus. La christologie admet deux sciences et deux volontés distinctes; au point de vue de la philosophie moderne, cela ferait deux consciences. Vous vous prononcez hardiment sur le rapport de l'une à l'autre, comme si l'Eglise avait déjà examiné ce rapport, comme si les anciens Conciles avaient en vue la psychologie du Christ et non un rapport métaphysique avec Dieu. Il y a là un problème à étudier: c'est la seule opinion ferme que j'aie sur le sujet (CL, 139).

Loisy concluded: Je ne suis qu'un pauvre déchiffreur de textes et la philosophie n'est pas mon fait. Que les philosophes m'apportent des lumières!" [1]

Since L'Evangile et L'Eglise was officially censured mainly for two reasons, the lack of an ecclesiastical Imprimatur and the discussion of a dangerous subject, "de nature à troubler gravement la foi des fidèles sur les dogmes fondamentaux de l'enseignement catholique," Loisy wrote a letter of apology to Cardinal Richard: "Il va de soi que je condamne et réprouve toutes les erreurs que l'on a pu déduire de mon livre, en se plaçant, pour l'interpréter, à un point de vue tout différent de celui où j'avais dû me mettre et m'étais mis pour le composer."[2]

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[1] CCM, 72; compare with a slightly different text in BV, 112, and the observations of Poulat in HDC, 520.

[2] APL, vii; see HDC, 136 and 163, where the letter is dated on February 2, and AL, 113-114, where it is dated on February 3.

On February 3, archbishop Mignot wrote to Loisy: "Votre Evangile et L'Eglise aurait fait grand bien si une meute de chacals ne s'était jetée sur lui; il serait resté dans le domaine de la spéculation, de l'étude attentive, de la méditation sereine, il aurait peu à peu éclairé ou raffermi bien des esprits." In his letter to Hügel, Mignot attributed the condemnation in great part to the ignorance of the episcopate and the clergy in biblical studies and the consequent scandal of the simple faithful (see HDC, 475).

On February 2, Wehrlé sent to Blondel a long explanation of his conversation with Guibert, on the preceding Wednesday. Wehrlé's first favorable impression of Loisy's book vanished away when Mourret and Blondel raised objections, the former against Loisy's orthodoxy, the latter against his methodology. Now Guibert has convinced him of Loisy's loss of Catholic faith. Wehrlé deplores also that Batiffol associated Loisy's name with that of Blondel and accused the latter of Kantian subjectivism.[1]

At this point, it would be useful to venture a personal opinion. It is quite possible that Guibert was mistaken on Loisy's loss of faith at that time. Loisy, no less than a host of other prominent Catholic scholars of the same period, realized that the scholastic formulation of Catholic faith was both inaccurate with respect to Scripture itself and unintelligible to the contemporary mentality formed by the critical methods. Surely Loisy had lost faith in the scholastic formulation of the Catholic dogma; but only one who confuses both of these, as Guibert very likely did, could accuse him of having lost the Catholic faith, at that time. There is no doubt that Loisy's rejection of the scholastic christology and his reluctance to substitute some other formulation on the grounds that he needed beforehand to complete his textual criticism of the New Testament and to find a more adequate philosophical and theological frame of reference left him open to the accusation of agnosticism.

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[1] One section of this letter was published in CCM, 70-71; another, in CCM, 301

Henri Bremond, who remained Loisy's friend until his death, established the following: (1) Loisy was both a genuine scholar and a devout priest; (2) neither as a scholar, nor as a priest did he betray what he believed to be true. In 1904 Loisy definitely rejected the absolutism and the scholastic formulation of the Catholic faith. In 1908, when he was excommunicated as vitandus (that is, no Catholic could publicly associate with him under pain of automatic excommunication), he finally rejected the Roman

Catholic church as having been unfaithful to the Gospel.[1]

In a letter to Maude Petre on August 12, 1931, Loisy wrote:

> In any case, so far as my attitude to the Church is concerned, it was not logic that dominated my steps. If I had followed abstract logical reasoning, I should have left the Church in 1885, or 1893, or above all in 1904. I left the Church when it became impossible to survive in it spiritually, and that is why I shall never return to it. In reality, the Roman Church is being transformed into a barracks, with intellectual and moral mobilization. Life can admit of many contradictions, but religious life cannot admit of them in the domain of morality. And the authority of the Church has become profoundly immoral.... And you regret, for me the loss of the Church, for the Church the loss of me. It seems that the Church cares little for this loss, and she is right, because I was certainly not the man she needed. She would only have done better to say it sooner. As to my own loss, I do not believe in it.[2]

Alec Vidler, who visited Loisy more than once in the 1930's, does not doubt "the sincerity of his faith and of his allegiance to the Church up to the time when the Church demanded a retraction of his modernist convictions," before excommunicating him. Vidler finds that English Protestants misunderstand usually Loisy's loss of faith:

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[1] Sylvain Leblanc [Henri Bremond] , *Un clerc qui n'a pas trahi: Alfred Loisy d'après ses Mémoires* (Paris: Nourry, 1931). See *HDC*, 655.

[2] M. D. Petre, *Alfred Loisy: His Religious Significance* (Cambridge University Press, 1944), pp. 124-125.

> The English tend to suppose that anyone who wishes to do so is entitled to call himself a Christian without regard to membership of a church. This subjective and individualistic attitude had never seemed reasonable to Loisy. He took it for granted that to be a Christian meant to be a member of a church, and it was for the Church to say who were and who were not its members. An individual professing to be a Christian without being a member of a church was a contradiction in terms.[1]

There is no doubt that Loisy remained very religious until the end of his life, prayed daily, studied the Bible, continued to write on religion, and never lost his faith in God. Louis Canet, his most intimate friend and to whom Laberthonnière and Loisy confided their private archives, has vouched for Loisy's sincerity.[2] I have received the personal testimonies of several Frenchmen and Frenchwomen who have known Loisy and still respect him very highly.

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[1] Alec Vidler, Twentieth Century Defenders of the Faith (New York: Seabury Press, 1965), p. 46. It would be interesting to compare the case of Loisy with that of Charles Davis. See A Question of Conscience (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

[2] See Petre, Op. cit., pp. 109ff.

CHAPTER IV

BLONDEL'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH LOISY AND HÜGEL IN 1903

On February 3, 1903, Blondel told Wehrlé his emotion, more than his surprise, at the revelation of Loisy's state of mind. He hopes that Wehrlé's letter to the latter will do some good. Personally, after thanking Loisy for his book and mentioning his fundamental reserve, he abstained from writing to him again.[1] He is waiting now for an answer from Hügel.[2]

Loisy had ironically suggested that some philosopher might bring him some light in his exegetical work. Wehrlé wrote him back on February 3: "Comme vous ne semblez pas opposé à recevoir un supplément d'informations philosophiques, j'ai pris la liberté de faire part à mon ami, Maurice Blondel, de la teneur intégrale de votre lettre" (BV, 112). The same day, he sent to Blondel Loisy's letter of February 2, asking for a reply. Blondel answered Wehrlé on February 4:

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[1] In his letter of November 25, 1902, he made only one timid observation, based on an impression, which a second reading of L'Evangile et L'Eglise might correct; see page 99 above and CCM,49).

[2] One section of this letter was published in BV, 112; the other in CCM, 114.

> Voici la pensée qui me vient. Pour laisser à M. Loisy plus de spontanéité et de confiance dans les objections --instructives--qu'il pourra nous faire, je crois préférable que vous répondiez d'abord en votre nom en usant, comme il vous plaira, du brouillon que, me mettant consciencieusement à votre place, je vais rédiger. De cette façon, M. Loisy acceptera sans doute mieux nos réserves, nos doutes, nos questions: un confrère est plus aisément accueilli qu'un laïc, qu'un philosophe, qu'un rêveur. Je crains qu'une intervention immédiate de ma part ne tarisse des confidences qui peuvent être utiles pour M. Loisy comme pour nous-mêmes.[1]

The strategy was for Blondel to write a first draft of a letter which Wehrlé as a priest, would send to a fellow priest, Loisy. Before Blondel's letter was finished, he received another letter from Wehrlé, the third in twenty-four hours. He decided to modify his plan:

> Je préfère vous adresser, comme consulté par vous, une lettre que vous enverrez à Bellevue: de cette façon, j'éviterai l'inconvénient d'apparaître comme un régent, et j'aurai plus de liberté pour exprimer certaines nuances d'idées et de sentiments. Votre réponse est d'ailleurs, comme était votre première lettre, tout à fait excellente. Je vais réfléchir à cette façon de procéder, et demain matin je rédigerai ce que je vois, comme vous, à objecter à ce séparatisme, à cette neutralité de l'histoire et de l'historien. 'S'il n'y a dans les deux premiers chapitres que ce qui apparaît à l'historien, partant point de christologie,'--c'est donc que la christologie est tout entière une addition superfétatoire, une fiction.

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[1] MMd, 22. The procedure of ghost writing was fairly common during the French Modernist crisis; see HDC, 621-647. Blondel wrote several anonymous articles, others under at least ten pseudonyms, and some under four or five well-known names: see H. Duméry, La philosophie de L'Action (Paris: Montaigne, 1948), pp. 178ff.

> Et il n'y a plus même de questions réservées ou d'autres problèmes ultérieurs (MMd, 22).

On February 6, Blondel wrote two letters to Wehrlé. In a short note, addressed confidentially to Wehrlé, he mentioned the difficulties of writing the second long letter which he meant to be transmitted by Wehrlé to Loisy. He proposed to create some doubt in Loisy's mind and to stop him from a perilous enterprise. He read with great satisfaction Laberthonnière's article on "Les études historiques et l'apologétique."[1] Blondel believes that Loisy is a victim of the positivist illusion. He refers to Bergson and Boutroux who have joined him in the criticism of the positivist illusion which he began some ten years earlier.

At the beginning of the long letter destined to Loisy via Wehrlé, Blondel wrote in diagonal a postscript: "Please note that in this letter I am acerbus rerum interpres, that I indicated mostly the pejorative aspect of the ambiguities that Loisy's expressions tend to create. If I were defending him publicly, as I would like to do, or even judging publicly his work, my criticism would be more balanced" [the translation is mine]. This passage is important to correct the generally negative views which the compiler of CCM thrusted upon Blondel in regard to Loisy.

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[1] APC, 145 (1903), 369-380.

When Wehrlé received Blondel's long letter, he forwarded it to Loisy with a short note dated February 9 (LOI, 26). Blondel begins by expressing his hesitation about how to solve the methodological and philosophical difficulties raised by Loisy's biblical exegesis. There is no question of asking Loisy to develop constantly a christology. At least, however, he should not solve systematically the New Testament problems in such a way as to exclude one. Loisy's scientific attitude in L'Evangile et L'Eglise presents a triple equivocation: (1) on the purpose of the book; (2) on the methodology employed; (3) on the nature and bearing of the conclusions.

Concerning the purpose of the book, Blondel agrees with Loisy's main thesis: the Catholic Church is the legitimate product of the Gospel in virtue of a logical and organic development. Instead of the idealistic and static categories of Harnack, Loisy made use of a realist and dynamic methodology, truly historical and scientific. There is nevertheless an ambiguity in Loisy's intentions. He starts either from the views of the New Testament authors (problem a), or from the consciousness of Christ himself on the nature of his mission (problem b). The choice between these two alternative problems determines the whole subsequent interpretation.

According to Blondel, a biblical scholar should develop first of all what he can know from the New Testament authors' views of Christ's mission. Assuming this point of departure, Loisy's theses are perfectly true and beautiful. For instance, the expectation of a proximate Parousia was the natural transposition of Judaic hopes, the imminent and semi-terrestrial consolation after disturbing disappointments, a means of fostering detachment from this world and heroism for martyrdom. Blondel wonders, however, if it is possible to draw all the ulterior developments of the Church from this original, human, and historical impulse. To limit oneself to this approach is to be tempted to reject the Christian idea of development of a germ adapting itself and assimilating organically the most varied elements, in favor of the pantheistic idea of evolution, according to which progress results from external influences. Such a view would limit Christianity to natural causes. To maintain the transcendence of Christianity, one must find a transcendent criterion to evaluate the whole history. Therefore, one cannot be satisfied with problem a, that is, studying the consciousness of the New Testament authors; one must inevitably treat of problem b, that is, the consciousness of Christ himself. Moreover, a purely scientific treatment of problem a could make problem b scientifically insoluble. Only a constant criterion, immanent to the whole series and yet transcendent to it, can preserve the transcendence of Christianity through nineteen centuries.

Unless such a criterion is found, the solution of problem b would involve begging the question and would result in an illegitimate passage from science to faith. It is impossible to understand the consciousness of Christ exclusively by the consciousness of his first interpreters, because the understanding of revelation was progressive through the Christian centuries. Consequently, Blondel concludes, timidly and provisionally, that the properly historical subject matter of L'Evangile et L'Eglise remains too equivocal.

Secondly, concerning the methodology, Loisy declares with modesty that he limits himself to textual criticism and abstains systematically from the metaphysical and theological problems. Blondel asks the question: are metaphysics and theology posterior or anterior to history? It is true, Loisy was not obliged to discuss these problems in his book. On the one hand, Loisy claims that metaphysics and theology are not at the beginning, but at the end of his exegetical work. On the other hand, he rejects transcendental and theological elements from historical and critical observation since the historian and the critical exegete limit themselves systematically to the texts and the facts.

Blondel cannot accept this methodology. It is an illusion, according to him, to operate without a metaphysics and a theology; when one does not acknowledge his, he still has an implicit one, and in that case, a more perilous one. As Aristotle said, one must philosophize if he wants to prove that he has no philosophy. Blondel refers to a recent study by Emile Boutroux, according to whom even the positivism of Auguste Comte implies a metaphysics. In his opposition to the scholastics, Loisy, no less than Kant himself--as a recent study by Bergson has pointed out--still labors with scholastic conceptions, with the illusion of hermetically separated sciences. The methodological doubt must be only provisional and fictitious. No man is ever without a philosophy, especially the scholar. The attitude of excluding systematically the transcendent and the supernatural from history and critical exegesis appears to Blondel false and disastrous, since exegesis should raise philosophical problems, and lead necessarily to the christological and theological problems.

Thirdly, concerning the conclusions, Blondel cannot understand how Loisy could ever write L'Evangile et L'Eglise with the exclusion of christology. If there is no christology in the facts of history, how will it ever be introduced? If the determinism of historical explanation suffices, will it ever be possible to raise the problem of the divine consciousness of Christ? Blondel recognizes willingly with Loisy that the problem of the human knowledge and consciousness of Christ still needs to be studied in order to avoid the danger of docetism.

But he does not accept Loisy's apparent distinction between the metaphysical and the psychological personalities, rejected also by Bergson in his refutation of both the realists and the phenomenalists. To deny the divine consciousness of Jesus means for Blondel to deny the divinity of Christ. How will it be possible then to maintain the duality of will, the duality of knowledge, and the human element in Christ? If Christ was perfectly conscious of being God, did he know everything in God?

Blondel recalls his conversation with Wehrlé in the course of the preceding summer and the solution towards which he is inclined, although historically unprovable. The two knowledges of Christ do not lead to a distinction of two personalities. According to Blondel, only scholastics would make this conclusion. The human character of Christ can be explained in this way:

> Le Christ a acquis, en être sensible et pâtissant, ce que nous acquérons nous-mêmes; mais en même temps sa science divine a enrichi analogiquement son imagination, au point que par une sympathie stigmatisante elle l'a rendu passif de l'Univers, conscient de nos inconsciences, de nos souffrances, de nos défaillances; il est vraiment homme, parce qu'il est l'homme de tous les hommes, son humanité est garantie et pour ainsi dire constituée par la nôtre, il est le Fils de l'homme (CCM, 79).

On February 7, Blondel answered Wehrlé. The latter would have preferred a refutation of Loisy's christology, as a consequence of his loss of Catholic faith. Blondel preferred to discuss the methodological problem more than the

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On February 7, Blondel answered Wehrlé. The latter would have preferred a refutation of Loisy's christology, as a consequence of his loss of Catholic faith. Blondel preferred to discuss the methodological problem more than the christological question as such: "C'est qu'avec M. Loisy une affirmation d'autorité, une thèse philosophique ou théologique semblent n'avoir aucun accès; c'est pour cela que j'ai tenté d'insinuer au moins un doute dans son esprit sur la légitimité, sur l'indiscutabilité de son attitude, de ses procédés, de son anti-philosophisme encore si scolastique" (CCM, 80). With the listing of a triple equivocation, Blondel thought of providing Loisy with a possible honorable solution. Agreeing with Wehrlé, he saw Loisy reviving Nestorianism: "Pour ne pas cesser de faire de Jésus un homme, il ne faut pas cesser d'en faire un Dieu. Ce n'est pas dans le sens de la péjoration, de la minimisation qu'est le progrès commun de la science et de la piété, c'est dans le sens d'une intelligence plus intense de la réalité humaine de sa connaissance, de sa souffrance et de son action, comme aussi de la réalité divine de son intervention rédemptrice et recréatrice" (Unpublished section of this letter in AB).

On the same day, February 7, La Semaine religieuse de Paris published an official note on the submission of Loisy and his decision to withdraw from the publisher a second edition of L'Evangile et L'Eglise. This announcement was a distortion of the letter of Loisy to Cardinal Richard on February 2.[1]

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[1] See APL, vii and 263; also, MOD, 172; CCM, 80.

While archbishop Mignot and Hügel were encouraging their friend to publish a second and annotated edition of L'Evangile et L'Eglise to offset the innumerable misinterpretations of unprepared readers, Loisy was reluctant to engage himself in theological subtleties which he avoided in his first edition. The additions prepared for the second edition consisted of an extra chapter on the Gospel sources and a new section in the chapter on the Son of God. Instead of an annotated edition of L'Evangile et L'Eglise, Loisy preferred to answer his critics by a collection of letters addressed to various personalities. This was the origin of Autour d'un petit livre.[1] On February 9, Hügel wrote to Loisy: "Après tout, nous demandons, en fait, au monde moyen catholique, de grandir sur ces questions de dix à vingt ans en une nuit" (MEM-I, 218; see HDC, 162).

On February 11, Loisy answered directly to Blondel. He refers to his letter of February 2 to Wehrlé in which he emphasized the difficulties of the christological problem more than its solution. Moreover, he claims no infallibility, whether in history or theology. He proceeds to answer the three main objections of Blondel. First, as an historian, he did not define the consciousness of Christ by the consciousness of it that his first interpreters obtained; but he has no other way of knowing the teaching and action of Christ than what the Gospels report. On the basis of historical criticism, his understanding of the eschatological ideas of the Saviour is more exclusive than that of Blondel. Since the fourth Gospel is virtually contained in the Synoptics, it does not give something substantially different, as Blondel is inclined to believe.

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[1] (Paris: Picard, 1903). The second edition in 1904 contains four more documents to the thirteen of the first edition.

Secondly, Loisy never denied the necessity of metaphysics for history. There are however different kinds of metaphysics and different kinds of theology. Loisy wants to defend modern critical methods against a type of theology that excludes them. The reason why Duchesne limited himself to textual criticism, writes Loisy, was to avoid conflicts with dogmatic theologians. Loisy does not believe any more than Blondel in hermetically separated sciences. If neoscholastics continue to pursue him, however, he will have to restrict himself to a purely critical approach. He suffers already from so many calumnies and wants to avoid further conflicts. If he has given up the idea of writing an historical apology for Christianity, it is because his reputation of orthodoxy has been ruined in theological circles.

Concerning the actual problem of christology, Loisy simply told Wehrlé that the traditional theory was a metaphysical definition, not a representation of the psychology of Jesus. He does not believe that he has written anything to justify Blondel's suspicion of Nestorianism; on the other hand, Blondel's christology, not fully expressed in his letter, is very different from the theological scheme of a two-storied (divine-human) person. Loisy agrees with Blondel that the Divinity was immanent in the humanity of Christ, and it was by the interior that it elevated Christ's humanity to the divine consciousness. But Loisy is not concerned so much with the philosophical principle, as with the historical, real, and psychological description of the consciousness of Christ. If one limits himself to scriptural texts, he discovers three elements in the evangelical image of the Messiah: (1) the idea of an eternal predestination (in St. Paul, the idea of preexistence); (2) the notion of a unique role in view of the messianic kingdom (to which is related the development of soteriology); (3) the idea of a unique communication of the divine spirit to Jesus (which determined the development of christology). There is thus a continuity between the historical Gospel and dogmatic development.

What about the relation between the idea of the Messiah and the divinity of Christ? As an historian, Loisy considers the christological dogma to be a metaphysical definition of an historical reality. While the Synoptics generally describe the human consciousness of Jesus and the fourth Gospel describes more his divine consciousness, the latter Gospel is not historical in the same sense as the former. Can the messianic determination of the consciousness of Jesus be a sufficient basis for faith in his divinity? Loisy thinks so. For the historian, the idea that Jesus had a clear consciousness of his divinity from the very moment of his conception, as Wehrlé suggested, is "un pur roman." From the viewpoint of history, the development of the divine consciousness of Jesus was idential with the development of his personal messianic consciousness. From the viewpoint of history alone, it is impossible to say that Jesus reached the consciousness of an absolute identity with God. Furthermore, the notion of personality is not univocal in its application to man and to God; it is difficult to define the personality of man and impossible to define the personality of God. Loisy prefers to avoid this terminology and instead to describe the communication of divine life and the revelation of God in Jesus. At first, Jesus was consecrated Messiah by the divine Spirit. God communicates himself differently to Jesus, the Church, and the world without being identified with either the man Jesus, the Church, or the world. From the viewpoint of the most orthodox theology, according to Loisy, the divine personality of Jesus is but an image of his effectual relation with God.

L'Evangile et L'Eglise, according to Loisy, was written for the purpose of showing the historical continuity between the Gospel and the Church, not directly the divine quality of either. This methodological abstraction is legitimate, and Loisy never claimed to make an absolute separation. Since Harnack admits the divinity of the Gospel, and Loisy proves the historical continuity between the Gospel and the Church, the divinity of the Church is implied. Consequently, Loisy's book does not imply the denial of any dogma: "Il implique seulement la nécessité de reviser tout l'enseignement théologique au point de vue de l'histoire pour le rendre positivement plus vrai, et, au point de vue philosophique, pour le rendre théoriquement plus intelligible" (CCM, 85). This was exactly Blondel's program, as far as philosophy was concerned. Loisy, nonetheless, is pessimistic on the outcome of the campaign of calumny against his book. Even though he received a favorable reply from a member of the Index, he does not expect to be spared: "J'attends maintenant la condamnation romaine. La Commission biblique n'est pas saisie de mon cas et ne le sera pas. Mais il existe encore d'autres Congrégations. Cette condamnation ne sera pas motivée par les lacunes de mon livre" (CCM, 85). From now on, Loisy will try to limit himself to purely critical studies which, by their nature, escape the interest of uncomprehending theologians.

On February 12, Hügel wrote a long response to Blondel's letter of January 11 (CCM, 114-126 and 63-65). Hügel plans to answer the four philosophico-religious questions raised by the philosopher of Aix. First, on the question of methodology, Hügel, no less than Loisy, agrees with Blondel on the rejection of the autarkeia of history. In contrast to Volkelt, Heinrich Holtzmann, Preuschen, Troeltsch, and Eucken in Germany, he is surprised to see French historians like Duchesne, Margival, and others writing as if metaphysics did not matter. Hügel would agree with Blondel on the predominance of metaphysics on two conditions: the first is temporary and concerns persons; the second is permanent and pertains to principles. With respect to persons, Hügel makes three points: (1) neither Loisy nor Tyrrell have rejected all metaphysics; (2) Loisy's antipathy for metaphysics is a reaction to the opposition of neoscholastics against the critical methodology of modern historians; Blondel should understand this point, writes Hügel, since he too suffered from the neoscholastic opposition; (3) Loisy's apparent a-metaphysical attitude is due to the fact that he knows yet of no metaphysics which honors history. With respect to principles, Hügel makes this point:

> S'il nous faut une métaphysique qui dépasse les faits historiques ou psychologiques, il nous en faut une qui, tout en les interprétant et approfondissant, ne les nie pas et ne les viole pas ou ne les dénature point. Elle n'a aucun droit d'exiger de l'historien de déclarer

> comme historiquement prouvé ou prouvable, ou comme historiquement possible, ou comme point historiquement d'être non avenu, ce qui serait respectivement, historiquement non prouvé, ou non prouvable, ou rendu impossible par des preuves historiques contraires conclusives, ou prouvé non avenu par des raisons historiquement finales. Et il ne faut pas non plus suppléer à ces décisions historiques par des décisions métaphysiques" (CCM, 118).

The real difficulty, according to Hügel, lies in the opposition which metaphysicians who have no sense of history make to the young science of history which is daily improving its methodology. How can a sincere Catholic who considers the Gospels as historical documents refuse to another sincere Catholic the application of historico-critical methods to those very documents? Loisy applied to the New Testament no other methodology than that which allowed Dr. Lightfoot to identify the seven epistles of St. Ignatius of Antioch.

Hügel rejects two opposite errors: (1) the static error of ultimately and hermetically separated sciences; (2) the opposite error of premature conclusions: psychology and history must not be sacrificed to metaphysics. This observation of Hügel is based on three facts: (a) man is a being *in fieri*, who conquers light and life through struggle and friction, whether it be in the intellectual, moral, or religious life; (b) the preliminary or the phenomenon is not the ultimate; (c) the ultimate must neither suppress, nor betray the preliminary, that is, the phenomenon. In God, the phenomenon and the noumen, the psychologico-historical and the metaphysical are grasped together, without succession or conflict; but in man, these harmonies are understood only after long and painful approximations. To speak of an immediate harmony between the phenomenon and the noumen is a vain pretention, according to Hügel.

Secondly, Blondel preferred to consider Christianity as a multiple action to be lived rather than a unique concept of thought. Hügel cannot agree more with Blondel. And yet, in spite of the struggle of life, Hügel believes that it is possible to arrive at an organized and synthetic view of Christianity. Such an organized and synthetic view of religion must have been achieved by Jesus himself, unless one denies him a human soul.

Thirdly, Blondel does not limit the thought of Jesus to a proximate Parousia. For this problem, Hügel relies on the critical and historical studies of the previous hundred years, in particular, on Johannes Weiss' Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes, according to which the earliest texts of the New Testament do make such a limitation.

Fourthly, the most formidable problem, Blondel does not accept the limitation of Jesus' consciousness to the instinctive and obscure mode of the Church's own consciousness. Hügel proposes three arguments against Blondel's reluctance.

First, Holtzmann established by a compilation of passages from the earliest redactions of the Gospel (the proto-Mark and the Aramaic Matthew) the expectation of a proximate Parousia by Jesus and his disciples. Secondly, Jesus' own solemn declarations that he has no knowledge of the day of the Parousia and that some of his disciples will still be alive when it comes cannot be attenuated by "mental reservations," by saying that Jesus did not want to reveal the day of Parousia, or else, that day comes at each man's death with his private judgment. Moreover, the limitation of Jesus' agony at Gethsemane by saying that the "tip of his soul" enjoyed beatific vision, the explaining away of his cry of abandonment on the cross or of his growth in wisdom in the presence of God and man appear to be fraudulent to Hügel. Thirdly, such a limitation of Jesus' consciousness would simply be normal if he had a real human nature. On the contrary, Blondel's thesis denies to Christ the human characteristics _in statu viatoris_. Hügel does not understand the Emmanuel simply as a transcendent Man: "non seulement le modèle de ce qu'il faut être, mais encore le modèle de la manière de le devenir" (_CCM_, 125). He refers to Petau's historical studies on Christian tradition as an illustration of the exegetical, psychological, metaphysical, and even devotional difficulties encountered by the prevalent christology which skims over the properly human characteristics of Christ. According to Hügel, the threat of naturalism lies on the side of those who attribute a Greek notion of human perfection to Christ rather than on the side of Loisy.

Hügel adds three final remarks: (1) although Loisy is not favored with a thirst and hunger for the absolute and the ultimate as Plato, Plotinus, Augustine, Spinoza, Eucken, Tyrrell, Laberthonnière, and even Blondel, nevertheless he is endowed with moral courage, honesty, perspicacity in history, and perseverance; it would be wrong to accuse him of naturalism; (2) Hügel gave his personal response to Blondel, not that of Loisy whom he has not consulted for this; (3) Hügel does not want to judge the presence or absence of Christian spirit in the opponents of Loisy, but he is convinced that the latter is "un chrétien doux et ferme, ouvert, courageux et humble" (CCM, 126).

On February 14, Blondel wrote to Wehrlé:

> Ne jugeons pas M. Loisy. De bonne foi, il croit à sa foi: respectons sa sincérité, sa souffrance, son effort méritoire de soumission, d'autant que ses habitudes de pensée et son tour d'esprit rendent plus héroïque le devoir de se soumettre là où il ne voit sans doute en face de lui qu'incompétence, inintelligence, routines, intrigues. Et tout cela y est--avec autre chose (CCM, 86 and BV, 112).

Since Wehrlé did not quite accept Blondel's limitations of revelation, the latter adds a further comment. Although revelation can be absolute and perfect in itself at the point of departure, it can be fully understood, developed, and formulated perfectly _by_ _us_ only at the point of arrival, at the consommation of the world. In other words, to rely exclusively on the Synoptics to determine the real teaching of Jesus amounts to prejudging the question in a naturalistic sense (_CCM_, 86).

On February 14, Blondel thanked Loisy for his long letter and the additional forty-five pages for a second edition of _L'Evangile_ _et_ _L'Eglise_. After a careful reading of these pages, he will again propose spontaneously a few observations, in spite of his incompetence in purely historical matters. Blondel does not want to inform Wehrlé of Loisy's letter unless the latter is willing (Unpublished letter in _LOI_, 26).

On February 16, Mignot informed Loisy of a letter he wrote to Vigouroux, an advisor to Cardinal Richard. In that letter, archbishop Mignot complains that Loisy's book was condemned for not having the _imprimatur_, while his opponents, in particular, Gayraud and Maignen, are allowed to write on doctrinal matters without an _imprimatur_. Moreover, instead of condemning _L'Evangile_ _et_ _L'Eglise_, it would be preferable to stop the campaign of calumnies and defamations against Loisy. It would be preferable to forbid extreme rightist newspapers as _L'Univers_ and _La_ _Vérité_ _française_ to discuss biblical problems which neither the authors nor the general public understand.[1] Finally, the incompetent bishops who have blamed Loisy should reserve their judgment until the Biblical commission has studied the matter (LOI, 27).

On February 15, Blondel began a long answer to Loisy which cost him much labor and was finished only three days later. In a first draft, Blondel attributes to Loisy the identification of the noumenon with the phenomenon; consequently, the rejection of the transcendent in favor of the immanent and the reduction of the supernatural character both of Christ and Christianity to the normal course of natural events.[2] In the final copy of the letter he sent, Blondel summarized his earlier letter dated February 6:

> Je me proposais, en écrivant à M. Wehrlé, de montrer que les raisons de défiance qu'il a contre votre exégèse, quoique sérieuses, ne sont peut-être pas décisives; qu'en tout cas on ne doit pas la juger avec l'alerte sévérité de plusieurs de vos censeurs; et qu'en des points essentiels, il subsiste des réserves ou des ambiguités dont les plus conservateurs pourraient se prévaloir en un sens tout à fait traditionnel.[3]

Blondel attributes to Loisy the following propositions: (1) our faith must abandon its medieval formulation; (2) the conception of Parousia was a provisional, useful, and even necessary vehicle for a more profound teaching; (3) the "pieux roman" of classical theology was but a scaffolding destined to be replaced by others to shelter the spirit of the eternal Gospel; (4) christology calls for a modification just as do eschatology and soteriology. Since Blondel is not a prophet, he thinks that only the Church is qualified to judge the success of such an enterprise, and such judgment is impossible until the twenty-fifth century. Blondel grants that Loisy has tackled a fundamental problem: "Pour que vous puissiez passer, il faut d'abord que la scolastique catholique et la scolastique protestante qui s'entretiennent l'une l'autre soient également amorties. Vous brûlez plusieurs étapes" (CCM, 87). Even if Loisy is right, Blondel thinks that he is going too fast, and to be right too soon is sometimes wrong. He recalls the letter of February 25, 1897, in which Loisy consoled him after the first wave of opposition from theologians; now he wants to console Loisy grieved by calumnies:

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[1] Blondel was a stock-holder of L'Univers until some articles were published in it against his philosophy.

[2] CL, 144-145 has given a few sections of this unpublished rough draft.

[3] CCM did not publish this section of the letter which can be read in LOI, 26.

> Au reste, il me paraît que, pour l'ensemble, nous avons tous deux une inspiration, une "folie" semblable. Il nous semble manifeste que la crise religieuse dont nous souffrons ne se dénouera point par la vertu de la scolastique, dans un retour au fixisme médiéval. Mais pour moi je borne ma visée au premier obstacle, à ce puéril et faux a priorisme, meurtrier de toute science comme de toute vie spirituelle. Vos pensées ne pourront prévaloir que si l'oeuvre préalable à laquelle je m'attache réussit (CCM, 88).

According to Blondel, Loisy's success presupposes the elimination of a rigid intellectualism and the elaboration of a new philosophical and theological synthesis. It presupposes the solution of Blondel's difficulty: "Posé l'état d'esprit néo-scolastique avec toutes ses causes, montrer quels en sont les effets délétères, et faire ressortir de là l'attitude philosophique que réclame aujourd'hui ce qui vit d'esprit critique et d'âme religieuse" (*CCM*, 88).

Blondel lists the points on which he agrees with Loisy: the odious character of an *a priori* theologism; the antecedent autonomy of history and exegesis; the consequent elaboration of metaphysics and theology [these last two points would seem to be in contradiction to Blondel's intention of developing some prolegomena to all future exegesis]; the legitimacy of the limited perspective of *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*; the normal development of the Church beginning with the evangelical eschatology; the historical character of the Synoptic picture of Jesus; the ineffable character of the divine and human personality; the understanding of theology as interpretation of history, as an intellectual and inadequate expression of mysterious, though positive realities; the absolute necessity of revising the whole traditional teaching: "*reviser tout l'enseignement traditionnel, au point de vue philosophique*, pour le rendre théoriquement plus intelligible, *en se servant de l'histoire*, pour le rendre positivement plus exact, plus intelligent du passé, plus fidèle au devoir de résurrection spirituelle et d'intimité sympathique, faute de quoi on connait l'humanité comme un cocher de fiacre connait les maisons d'une ville."[1] While Loisy spoke of revising the whole _theological_ teaching, beginning with history to make it positively more true and then with philosophy to make it theoretically more intelligible, Blondel spoke of revising the whole _traditional_ teaching. Loisy would begin with history and philosophy, while Blondel would begin with philosophy and _make use of_ history.

Blondel comes then to his objections against Loisy. Jesus' consciousness of his identity with God, which can be accessory to the purely historical viewpoint by virtue of a methodological abstraction, still holds a supreme importance for faith. The belief in Christ's divinity entertained by saints during nineteen centuries cannot have been but "un pieux roman."[2] The Christian supernatural, continues Blondel, la conscience de Jésus fournit-elle une base suffisante à la foi en sa divinité? Je le crois. L'idée que le Christ aurait eu conscience d'être personnellement Dieu dès l'instant de sa conception, comme le veut M. Wehrlé, n'est pour l'historien, qu'un pur roman" (CCM, 83). Obviously, Loisy wanted to defend the critical methodology of the historian. Blondel misunderstood him completely and thought that Loisy was rejecting the whole of Christian theology and spirituality as "un pieux roman." On February 18, the philosopher wrote ironically to the exegete: "Le pieux roman de la théologie classique n'est qu'un échafaudage, destiné à disparaître pour laisser place à d'autres constructions" (CCM, 87). Further in the same letter, Blondel added: "Il ne sera peut-être jamais indifférent au coeur humain, ni même à la raison philosophique, ni à la vie sociale, ni en un mot à l'efficacité du Christianisme, que le 'Mystère de Jésus' dans l'âme d'un Pascal ou d'une sainte Thérèse, non plus que dans la nôtre, ne soit qu'un pieux roman" (CCM, 89). In his letter to Hügel, the following day, on February 19, Blondel came back to this same problem: "Oui ou non le Mystére de Jésus dans l'âme d'un Pascal ou d'une sainte Thérèse, n'a-t-il été qu'un pieux roman?" (CCM, 134). Morever, on the word of Wehrlé reporting the opinion of Guibert, Blondel was laboring under the impression that Loisy had rejected completely the Christian faith (see CCM, 71). In an effort to avoid accusing Loisy of failure to maintain the Christian orthodoxy, he sought desperately for the flaws in his methodology. Nevertheless, Blondel could not refrain himself from raising a very blunt question to Loisy: "Oui ou non, croyez-vous que Jésus a eu, par devers lui, le sentiment, la claire possession de sa Divinité? car de la réponse, extra-historique, que vous faites à cette question, dépend la tonalité même de votre histoire et le principe qui gouverne votre critique, au moins par réaction et pour l'exposé synthétique de votre doctrine" (CCM, 110). Blondel grants provisionally to Loisy that historical science as such cannot answer this question; but if Loisy has already rejected personally the orthodox faith in christology, then his methodological reserve would be viewed as a negation of Christ's divinity. In a postscriptum Blondel recognized that he had gone too far in impugning Loisy's personal faith: "Je crains d'ailleurs de m'être mépris sur ce que j'ai appelé 'votre foi contre la foi.' Je reconnais qu'au point de vue de l'histoire objective, la psychologie de Jésus intime est non seulement inaccessible, mais étrangère aux problèmes à traiter. Votre solution personnelle, quelle qu'elle soit, ne peut ni ne doit logiquement réagir sur vos principes, parce qu'elle n'en est pas une conséquence forcée. C'est parce que j'avais cru comprendre que votre façon de procéder entraînait une Christologie contestable, que j'avais d'abord cherché un vice de méthode" (CCM, 111).

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[1] _CCM_, 89. The underlining is mine. Compare with Loisy's expressions: "reviser tout l'enseignement _théologique_ au point de vue de l'histoire pour le rendre positivement plus vrai, et, au point de vue philosophique, pour le rendre théoriquement plus intelligible" (_CCM_, 85). The compiler of _CCM_ compared the "modernist" Loisy with the "integrist" Blondel in this fashion: "A la différence de Loisy, au contraire de Loisy, Blondel entendait sauvegarder les dogmes de la foi catholique intégralement, scrupuleusement" (_CCM_, 11).

[2] In his letter of February 11, Loisy described as "un pur roman" what Wehrlé wanted him, _qua_ historian, to describe the consciousness that Christ had of being God from the very instant of his conception: "La détermination messianique de

must differ not only in degree, but also in nature, from the ordinary action of God in the world and in man. Blondel reproaches Loisy for neglecting and considering as "accessory" the core of christology and the soul of piety and mysticism. In the margin of the letter, there is at this point a passage which was not reproduced in *CCM*: "Il ne s'agit pas d'une théorie philosophique de Jésus sur lui-même, mais de ce qu'il y a de plus concret, de plus immédiat, de son intuition interne, indépendamment de toute terminologie et de toute spéculation." Blondel understands this so-called "accessory" problem as the fundamental principle for the *instauratio magna* of a more subtle theology and doctrinal transformism. He accuses again Loisy of not maintaining his methodological neutrality as an historian. Only a critical philosophy could reconcile Loisy's "historicisme" and scholastic theology. This problem is very complex. According to Blondel, what we need is neither the odious dogmatism, nor the theologism *a priori*, nor the methodological skepticism of the historian, but "des *prolégomènes à toute exégèse future*, c'est-à-dire, une réflexion critique sur les conditions mêmes d'une science de la Révélation et de toute littérature sacrée" (CCM, 90; the underlining is mine). Without such prolegomena to all future exegesis of revelation, the dilemma would be either a Boeotian acceptance of what is in question or an exclusion *a priori* of what should be reserved for examination *a posteriori* (In *CCM*, 90, the word "absoudre" was written instead of "admettre").

According to Blondel, three data of the problem need examination. First, "l'histoire, dans le ressort précis de sa compétence et de son autonomie n'a point à discerner le surnaturel en tant que tel" (CCM, 90). History as such can discover only what is immanent in human determinism. Secondly the historian, as a man and perhaps a Christian, must necessarily raise ultimate questions about humanity and Christianity. Is it impossible to verify the natural foundations of the requirements of faith? In spite of what modern psychology, based on a posteriori observation, might object a priori, Blondel believes that his own philosophy might be more successful: "Ma philosophie, plus défiante et fort opposée aux intrépidités ontologiques de toute scolastique ancienne ou récente, se borne à reconnaître que rien, absolument rien ne nous autorise à opposer aux prétentions de la foi une fin de non recevoir" (CCM, 91). Loisy's methodology cannot prove the personal immortality of the elect, nor the knowledge of God, and reduces Jesus to "un Inconscient et un Impulsif." Two points are granted by Blondel: (a) history cannot discern the reality or non-reality of the object of faith; (b) philosophy cannot prove its possibility or impossibility.

Thirdly, Blondel proposes to verify two hypotheses by the outcome of admitting or rejecting a positive revelation.

First, if there is a positive revelation, if a truly divine Word was spoken in a human word, it is necessary that a continuous and permanent development imitate little by little, by its indefinite wealth, the infinite fullness of grace, which _totum simul_ as eternity, cannot be exhausted in one segment of time. Hence, only a thesis of doctrinal "development" can be orthodox with respect to revelation. Even if divine truth can be found in the past, it will be discovered more fully only in the future. The first expression of such divine truth is but a rudimentary sketch. Divine Assistance means the Identical Eternity present equally through the fluctuations of time. The criterion which allows us to recognize the divinity of the Gospel and the Church is the living continuity and unity in the diversity of developments. Secondly, if there is no divine revelation, everything can be explained by historical determinism. There is no more Emmanuel. The autonomy of history is then not only a method, but an exclusive doctrine.

Blondel accuses Loisy of oscillating between these two hypotheses, and of being more faithful to his method than to faith. To treat the Gospels as ordinary history implies a denial _a priori_ of the divinity of Christianity and the reduction of Christianity to Religion in general. Blondel summarizes again his main objection: "Entre la scolastique morte et _meurtrière_ et l'_historicisme_ (j'emploie ce mot à dessein pour montrer qu'il s'agit d'un système au moins implicite vers lequel glisse l'historien qui n'a pas une méthodologie critique et explicite), il y a une lacune à combler, des prolégomènes à définir" (CCM, 93). The pretense of setting up the foundations of Christianity and christology on history alone is vain, for it implies the virtual negation of positive revelation and a specific supernatural. Loisy, of course, professed to reject such a pretension when he wrote in the introduction to L'Evangile et L'Eglise:

> C'est, en effet, au point de vue de l'histoire que l'on a voulu se mettre dans cette étude. On ne s'est nullement proposé d'écrire l'apologie du catholicisme et du dogme traditionnel. Si l'on avait eu cette intention, le présent travail serait très défectuex et incomplet, notamment en ce qui regarde la divinité du Christ et l'autorité de l'Eglise. On n'entend pas démontrer ici la vérité de l'Evangile ni celle du christianisme catholique, mais on essaie seulement d'analyser et de définir le rapport qui les unit dans l'histoire. Le lecteur de bonne foi ne s'y trompera pas (EE, vii).

If one is not inclined to view Blondel as a reader "in bad faith," he must attribute his erroneous interpretation of Loisy's methodology to the false impressions derived from his first reading of L'Evangile et L'Eglise when he was physically feverish and morally depressed. According to Blondel, the Synoptic picture of Christ, confused with his reality, is but an illusion of scholastic intellectualism. The distinction between the historicity of the Synoptics and that of the fourth Gospel insinuates under the phenomenal facts a contradiction between ontological absolutes. To say that a metaphysical interpretation is exclusive of historical truth is to attribute to history a metaphysical sufficiency which transforms it into an ontology. To declare that God is in Christ and in the Church as he is in the world amounts to eliminating Supernaturalism and even rationalistic Deism in favor of an idealistic monism.

Blondel will not risk any discussion of texts with Loisy. He accepts all the points of departure of Loisy, but disagrees with him on the method of establishing the specifically supernatural element in Christ, the Gospel, and the Church. Blondel remains baffled by a dilemna in Loisy: "D'une part, vous faîtes consister le message de Jésus en l'annonce littérale et formelle de la Parousie avant le terme d'une vie humaine, d'une génération. D'autre part, pour établir l'humanité à peu près exclusive de sa conscience, vous invoquez son ignorance de l'avenir. Je ne lève pas cette contradiction d'une façon qui me satisfasse" (Notice the errors of transcription of this passage in CCM, 94).

On February 18, after three days of preoccupation with ill-health in his family, Blondel returned to his endless letter. He recognizes now the evident unfairness of his accusations, in particular, in his last pages which "dénaturent ma pensée à votre égard, par l'entrainement d'une dialectique simpliste et injuste" (CCM, 94-95). Forgetting the historical and non-theological intention of the book, Blondel was not always "un lecteur de bonne foi," and it was difficult to resist the temptation of calumniating the condemned Loisy: "Ce que je vous dis en cette trop longue lettre vise donc moins votre pensée réelle qui dépasse souvent mon horizon, que les fausses interprétations auxquelles elle donne parfois, je le crains, trop de facilités" (CCM, 95). In contrast to the arrogance of conceited scholastics, Blondel proposes some modest and revisable prolegomena. He admits the truth, the beauty, and the fecundity of Loisy's limited thesis: "L'Eglise est L'Evangile continué, et l'Evangile est la foi au Royaume." What Blondel finally objects to is the identification of the historical portrait of Jesus with reality. Each century contributes something of our knowledge of Christ. According to Blondel, "il faut croire que les accrues de la Christologie, par le travail séculaire de la science et de la piété chrétiennes sont toutes compossibles, et que, contrairement à l'évolution des choses naturelles, le point ultime joindra le point initial: c'est l'hapax du christianisme" (CCM, 95-96).

On February 16, Mourret sent to Blondel his observations on the latter's projected book on "L'Esprit chrétien": "Je ne me dissimule pas que les préjugés ne sont pas disparus contre vos écrits. Mais c'est une raison de plus pour que vous nous donniez l'explication très catholique, très traditionnelle que contiendra votre nouveau livre" (BV, 81). Even though Blondel had not published recently under his own name, he was still a subject of controversy. To offset suspicions of heterodoxy, he is invited to write in a very catholic and very traditional way. On February 17, Blondel informed Mourret of his long letters to Loisy and Hügel:

> Plus j'y réfléchis, plus je demeure effrayé des resultats naturels d'un "historicisme," qui est à sa façon une ontologie inconsciente et d'autant plus exclusive. Quel long chapitre je me propose d'écrire sur les Prolégomènes (rien de kantien) à l'Exégèse, et la Méthodologie de la critique biblique! Entre le bloc scolastique et le bloc kantien que heurte M. Gayraud de sa main granitique, il y a pourtant place pour autre chose! Mais ce quelque chose risque tout de même d'être longtemps écrasé.

Blondel wants to write some prolegomena to exegesis and biblical criticism. Even if he knows that he has no competence in the biblical sciences, he believes that he is qualified, as a philosopher, to develop such a methodology. Since the word "prolegomena" sounds dangerous in the minds of many, and since he has already been accused of being a Kantian, he will have to declare that he is anti-Kantian to reassure them. On the other hand, he is definitely opposed to the scholastics, as much as Loisy and Hügel; but he wants to separate himself from Loisy who has lost his reputation of orthodoxy. Between the scholastic school which he does not want and the Kantian school which has been accused of heterodoxy in Roman Catholic circles, Blondel would like to develop an intermediary school of thought; but he knows that such a "critical" school will encounter much opposition for some time to come.

On February 19, Blondel answered Hügel's letter of a week earlier. As Blondel is working on his manuscript for "L'Esprit chrétien," he offers to Hügel's criticism some of the observations he wants to include on the methodological problems of exegesis. The letter is still divided in four sections, practically the same as his letter of January 11, and Hügel's response on February 12: (1) the question of methodology; (2) the synthesis of Christianity; (3) the problem of the Parousia; (4) the christological problem.

First, Blondel agrees with Hügel on the preliminary autonomy of historical investigation, the condemnation of *a priori* dogmatism and theologism, the necessity of metaphysics and theology *in fieri* based on the positive data of history, science, and life. He is not conscious of having questioned the methodological doubt, the scientific abstractions, nor the independence of exegesis. But he claims that the methodological doubt can only be provisional and that history alone cannot solve the problem of biblical exegesis. According to Blondel, the historian is responsible for three tasks: (1) to collect, classify, and criticize the facts, without any preconceived metaphysics or theology, *a parte ante*, or *ad partem post*; (2) to resurrect within the facts observed externally the life, the link between ideas, and the human elements; (3) since these human elements are imbued with metaphysics, the historian must necessarily link his work to metaphysical and religious views. Blondel is convinced that Hügel agrees so far with him and refers to convergent studies of Emile Boutroux and Henri Bergson. These three principles, nonetheless, do not suffice for biblical exegesis.

If one subjects *L'Evangile et L'Eglise* to the triple test of philological and critical dissection, of psychological history, of positivist and evolutionist metaphysics, one is confronted with the following problems with respect to Christianity: (a) historical facts as such will never manifest automatically the supernatural and will always remain within the limits of natural phenomena; (b) philosophy can establish neither the *possibility*, nor the *impossibility* of a positive revelation.

If one makes the hypothesis of faith, however, and accepts the claims of Christianity, what attitude should one take to examine these claims without eliminating them implicity *a priori*? Some explicit *prolegomena to all sacred exegesis* are needed. Biblical exegesis, according to Blondel, cannot proceed normally as the exegesis of any literature. If the supernatural elements are not to be eliminated from Scripture, the exegesis must necessarily presuppose the hypothesis of faith.

If one begins then with the hypothesis of a positive revelation, with the presence of an eternal truth in temporal and local forms, some definite consequences follow for the understanding of the history of Christianity. The divine and human Word of Jesus was never circumscribed. Jesus spoke in the wind, wrote in the sand; his living teaching was sifted through mobile and inconsistent minds; its divine fullness cannot have been expressed adequately by any human translation, however literal it might claim to be. Therefore, the only way a positive divine revelation is conceivable is to admit that it is progressive and continuous, that even the New Testament, however faithful, is but a rudimentary expression of the eternal Spirit, simultaneously present throughout time and the various forms of civilization. Neither the literal scriptural text, nor the scholastic definitions can exhaust the infinite reality of the Word of God. The notion of doctrinal "development" is orthodox; "c'est le _fixisme_ qui est une hérésie virtuelle" (_CCM_, 129). The whole of Christian tradition is necessary to understand Christ: "L'Evangile n'est rien sans l'Eglise, l'enseignement des Ecritures rien sans la vie de la Chrétienté, l'exégèse rien sans la tradition,--la tradition qu'on aurait tort de regarder comme simplement conservatrice et limitative, puisqu'elle doit être, puisqu'elle est conquérante et développante" (CCM, 129).[1] Blondel believes in the fundamental identity and unity of the various Christs of tradition, those of Mark, John, Athanasius, Augustine, Thomas, Theresa, Marguerite-Mary. Ordinary historical methods cannot be applied to the Synoptics without a radical elimination of the *hapax legomenon* of Christianity, the reduction of Christianity to naturalistic evolution instead of *development* which is a "création continuée à partir d'un germe qui transsubstantie ses aliments" (CCM, 129). The historian can determine the *image* of Jesus by the testimony of his first witnesses, but he must judge the *development* of Christianity as an outcome of the *thought* of Jesus where it was fully understood. According to Blondel, the whole of Christian history unravels what was already explicitly known by Christ, insofar as he was God.

Hügel spoke of three errors of the "intellectualism" of abstract thinking when it claims to be self-sufficient, the exact reproduction of life, and the adequate substitute for reality. Blondel adds a fourth error, when it identifies a representation, an objective image, a portrait with a portion of reality. Blondel is definitely opposed to the naive realism of the scholastic theory of knowledge which identifies the idea with reality. "Historicism," according to Blondel, is no less erroneous; it is neither science nor philosophy, but an outcome of scholasticism. "Historicism" identifies phenomenal facts with absolute realities, portraits with substantial persons. Facts and portraits will never exhaust the understanding of Jesus: "On ne peut voir Jésus que dans son oeuvre totale et par son immanence en l'Eglise autant et plus qu'en l'Evangile" (CCM, 131). The Church, in its development, is more instructive on Christ than the Gospel, in its compact and laconic portrait.

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[1] We shall discuss Blondel's notion of tradition in chapter seven when we analyze his fuller treatment of it in *History and Dogma*.

Secondly, Blondel does not reject the possibility of a synthetic view of Christianity. His projected book on "L'Esprit chrétien"--he emphasizes the singular number--can vouch for this. Even though the whole of Christianity was synthesized in Jesus' thought, Blondel argues that we, in statu viatoris, cannot understand it except through its complete development.

Thirdly, Blondel is not convinced of the eschatological thesis of Loisy. The expectation of a proximate Parousia, for the philosopher of Aix means simply this: "C'est la synthèse imaginative primitive, c'est l'aspect représentatif d'une réalité qui avait besoin dès l'abord du véhicule d'un système;

c'était l'ébauche d'une Métaphysique de la Destinée surnaturelle de l'homme, à la portée des pêcheurs de Tibériade" (CCM, 132).[1] Either it was an objective illusion, the transitory and human aspect of a divine truth, or the authentic source of the whole Christian development. In the first case, the development of Christianity is not exhausted by this primitive formulation; in the second, Christianity results from a chronological evolution:

> Pour qu'on puisse dire que l'Eglise est, non une simple suite chronologique entre beaucoup d'autres, mais le développement de la Bonne Nouvelle du Royaume, il faut admettre que la voix qui a prêché le règne de Dieu a inséré, dans le déterminisme de l'histoire, une parole dont la répercussion était assez justement calculée pour que l'écho retentisse à jamais, sous mille formes concertantes, dans l'Eglise immortelle (CCM, 132).

Without an antecedent finality and a specifically supernatural action at its origins, Christianity is reduced to natural religion and Christian history is reduced to an amplified echo of humanity.

Fourthly, Blondel rejoices over Hügel's appreciation for the devotional aspect of the christological problem. In spite of his philological blindness and exegetical ignorance, he ventures a discussion of texts, what he avoided with Loisy. He does not highly estimate textual critics: the terms used to describe them are all borrowed from the kitchen: "Les cuisiniers de la grammaire et de la chronologie ... je leur sais infiniment gré de leurs balayages, de leurs épluchages, de leurs découpages: ils nous offrent enfin quelque chose de propre, de sûr, de nourrissant. Mais cette première tâche ne peut nous mettre que dans la disposition des témoins, des convives" (CCM, 133). The work of the philosopher pleases him more: he is the "gourmet," the true "connoisseur" who takes, understands, and digests. While internal criticism appears to him as always partial, using some texts against other texts, for example, using the Synoptics to disprove the historicity of the fourth Gospel, Blondel declares that such oppositions are due to a confusion between phenomenal facts and ontological absolutes, typical of "historicism." Facts can never contradict each other, nor exclude ideas. Jesus revealed his mystery only to those who were well disposed by grace and interior generosity: qui habet aures audiendi audiat. Blondel follows the expectant attitude of Gamaliel: si ex hominibus est opus hoc, dissolvetur. The greatest miracle of all would be the invention of Christianity by someone else than Jesus.

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[1] This assertion, crucical to Blondel, could only be meaningless to Loisy and Hügel.

Was the mystery of Jesus in the soul of Pascal or saint Theresa but "un pieux roman"? (See page 160 above). Must christology and soteriology undergo a modification as eschatology did? If Christ is really God, Blondel would say: "La conscience de sa Divinité l'abandonne moins encore que ne nous abandonne la conscience de notre humanité; et la conscience de son humanité est faite de toutes nos consciences humaines" (CCM, 135). Once again, we see that in Blondel's christology, the Incarnate Word has assumed not so much a human nature, but rather the human nature. Christ cannot be conceived, according to Blondel, *more scolastico*, as a static entity formed of a human nature joined mechanically to a divine nature by means of another abstract notion, the notion of personality. Such a sublimated humanity leaves him cold. On the other hand, the encounter of a real person is much warmer. Jesus is man because he knows and suffers as we do; he acquires by experience what everyman does; at the same time, his humanity is deified, "en sorte qu'on peut dire que, sans accroissement *extensif*, il y a en lui cette progression *intensive* par laquelle le fini participe à l'infini et l'imite sans jamais se confondre avec lui" (CCM, 135). If the humanity of Jesus is not absorbed by his Divinity, it is because our humanities act as a screen: "Si nous sommes par Lui, il est par nous; il est à la lettre, le *Fils de l'Homme*" (CCM, 136). If Christ were not everything in a certain sense, he would be nothing and there would be nothing.[1]

Blondel believes that Hügel reduced Christ to an exemplar for moral and religious life, eliminated the human solidarity in sin, the absolute redemption, the invisibly efficacious and universally communicated grace. Knowledge is substituted for reality. Such a sentimental and aristocratic idealism as that of Hügel, Blondel writes, destroys Catholicism by suppressing the ignorant soul of the Church from participation in the visible body of Christ. Neither the humanity, nor the divinity of Christ can be minimized; on the contrary, they must be maximized. As man, Christ is "l'universel stigmatisé des douleurs humaines."[2]

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[1] See Claude Troisfontaines, "Le Christ, lien substantiel, dans les premiers écrits de Maurice Blondel" (Dissertatio ad lauream in facultate theologica; Romae: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1965). Troisfontaines discusses in detail Blondel's "Panchristisme" and his understanding of Christ as "le Réalisateur universel."

[2] CCM, 137. In a eulogy for Au Coeur de la Crise moderniste, Tilliette expresses his admiration for the christology of Blondel: "Blondel pourfend sans relâche cette erreur de prendre le portrait--objectif--pour un morceau ou un substitut de la réalité (95). Le "Mystère de Jésus" n'est pas du ressort de la pure histoire, c'est un mystère actuel. Le Christ est indissociable de l'humanité dans laquelle il a pris corps, qu'il a assumée. Il ne s'est pas revêtu d'une humanité de fortune, comme d'un vêtement emprunté, il a véritablement épousé toute l'humanité en devenant homme (240). C'est là l'aspect le plus insistant et le plus original de la christologie blondélienne. Dans sa perspective réaliste et universaliste, qu'est-ce qui constitue l'humanité de Jésus? Il est l'Homme (61), l'homme de tous les hommes (65), 'il n'est homme

Blondel attempts a summary of his letter. Historical explanations cannot occupy so fully the ground floor as to eliminate the room for a stairway either to the cellar or to the attic. Metaphysics is neither anterior, nor posterior only; but it is immanent to everything that is human. Exclusive history, exclusive philosophy, and exclusive exegesis are but provisional abstractions. Some prolegomena are necessary for biblical exegesis if the supernatural elements are not to be

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que par nous et pour nous' (61). Il endure l'humanité, il porte toutes les consciences et inconsciences humaines. On pourrait parler d'Humanitas assumpta. Et l'Humanité glorieuse est réalisée, solidifiée en quelque sorte par tous les actes et efforts humains. Blondel fait bon marché des formulations scolastiques de la distinction verbale entre personnalité métaphysique et personnalité psychologique (78), dont Bergson, dit-il, a fait justice. La clef de la psychologie du Christ se trouve dans sa 'sympathie stigmatisante' (79), admirable expression qui reparait à plusieurs reprises. C'est elle qui empêche volontairement l'humanité de Jésus de se fondre dans le brasier de la divinité. Nos inconsciences, nos faiblesses servent pour ainsi dire d'écran (135) à sa vive flamme, assurent la condensation de son âme humaine, en même temps que notre élan indéfini est véhiculé par l'Humanité glorieuse. Jésus est le Fils de l'Homme (79), son humanité est pour ainsi dire garantie et constituée par la nôtre, il est conscient de nos inconsciences. Blondel s'installe carrément dans l'intériorité spirituelle et mystique, contre les restrictions objectivantes de Loisy. Le Christ est moi absolument, et chacun de nous intimement. Le 'Mystère de Jésus' dans l'âme d'un Pascal et d'une sainte Thérèse (89, 134) n'a pas été un pieux roman, la dévotion des siècles chrétiens ne s'est pas repue d'un rêve. Au fond, le problème qui irrite Loisy est 'accessoire' en regard de ces témoignages" (X. Tilliette, "Blondel et ses correspondants," Archives de philosophie, 24 (1961), 176). On page 170, Tilliette observes that Galtier, the proponent of the Assumptus homo christology, was the heir of Déodat de Basly, an enthusiastic admirer and correspondent of Blondel and Laberthonnière: see BV-II, 275-276. Tilliette, a disciple of Bouillard, defends the orthodoxy of Blondel against the critical methodology of Loisy, Hügel and Duméry: this confusion explains his partiality.

eliminated from Christianity. Otherwise, after eschatology, christology will be considered as a phase of Christianity, Christianity as a phase of religion, and so forth. Blondel does not want to counteract what is good in the work of Loisy, nor to betray any Christian truth. He submitted to Hügel's criticism what he wants to include in his book on "L'Esprit chrétien": "Votre collaboration est incomparable parce qu'il n'y a que vous chez qui l'on trouve philosophie et critique unies, au degré où vous les conciliez en vous" (CCM, 138).

On February 21, Blondel sent to Wehrlé Hügel's Letter of February 12 and the rough draft of his response of February 19. He has great respect for the baron: "Je le vénère comme un des esprits les plus riches, les plus vivants, les plus pieux que l'on puisse rencontrer en ce monde -- et son érudition est prodigieuse tant que son âme reste fraiche et novice."[1] This exchange of letters caused insomnia and anguish to Blondel as he feels himself surrounded by abysses, "abîmes de fausse science et d'idéalisme, abîmes d'inintelligence et de pharisaïsme"(CCM, 149). He has just received Batiffol's article and makes this observation: "Quels sots compartiments! Il n'en est pas moins vrai que ses critiques rencontrent parfois juste, et que le procès de tendances qu'il intente à Loisy, quoique excessif et illégitime souvent, me semble viser pourtant des défauts ou des dangers réels."[1]

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[1] CCM, 148. This letter is dated February 21, 1902, in BV, 139, and February 24, 1903 in AP, 102.

When he read the proofs for the second edition of L'Evangile et L'Eglise, Hügel wrote to Loisy on February 22: "Vous avez mis dans la totalité de cette réponse à Harnack tout ce dont nous pouvons prévoir besoin jusqu'à cinquante ans d'ici" (HDC, 545).

Again, on February 22, Loisy answered Blondel's long epistle of the previous week: "Vous étiez né pour écrire des Encycliques, et, si je suis admis au prochain conclave, je poserai votre candidature" (CCM, 96). Since they agree on many points, Loisy will mention only those on which they still disagree. First of all, what is accessory to a purely historical investigation is not so to faith: "J'ai dit, ou j'ai voulu dire que la détermination toute spéciale et historique de la conscience du Christ était une question accessoire au point de vue de la foi; je n'ai point dit que la notion du Christ fût une chose accessoire pour la foi; cette notion est l'aliment de la foi bien qu'elle ne soit pas invariable dan sa définition intellectuelle" (CCM, 96). Loisy never claimed to draw out the Christian supernatural directly from a purely historical knowledge of the Gospel, but he believes that a better historical knowledge of the Gospel will influence one's notion of the Christian supernatural. Nevertheless, this position could not satisfy Blondel.

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[1] CCM, 302. See P. Batiffol, "L'Evangile et L'Eglise," in BLE, 5 (1903), 3-15. Batiffol accused Loisy of developing the agnosticism and evolutionism of Spencer just as he accused Blondel of trying to impregnate Catholicism with the subjectivism of Kant and Ritschl.

Loisy remembers Blondel writing: "Vos pensées ne pourront prévaloir que si l'oeuvre préalable à laquelle je m'attache réussit" (CCM, 88), which could mean that biblical exegesis depends on the success of the philosophy of L'Action. Loisy adds ironically: "Si je voulais être un peu méchant je vous dirais que vous me reprochez surtout de n'avoir pas mis votre philosophie dans mon histoire" (CCM, 96). He has one excuse: "Votre philosophie est encore, en grande partie, inédite, tandis que mon histoire, hélas! n'est que trop publiée" (CCM, 96). After a careful study of Blondel's unpublished manuscripts written up to 1903, it may be said that had he published them, he might have been criticized and condemned as much as Loisy. The difference between them is that Loisy distinguished between faith in God and obedience to ecclesiastical authorities and sometimes preferred to maintain intellectual honesty at the risk of ecclesiastical disobedience,while Blondel believed that the Church's infallible authority requires absolute obedience and sometimes preferred to revise his own philosophy to integrate in it ecclesiastical directives. This is my personal opinion. But I must also acknowledge the opinion of Professor George Lindbeck who prefers to state the difference between Blondel and Loisy in terms of the former's "Panchristisme" which made him more inclined to unite faith in God and in the magisterium in contrast to Loisy's combination of historical concentration and ecclesiastical positivism.

Loisy does not quite follow Blondel's discussion of Jesus' consciousness. He begins by refuting a long series of misreadings and accusations of Blondel. He never contested the possibility of God adopting a human consciousness, nor the personal immortality of the elect, nor the knowledge of God; he never reduced Christ to be "un inconscient" and never compared the divine and human intellects of Christ to the experimental and geometric sciences. On the other hand, Loisy is stunned by certain affirmations of Blondel: "Vous parlez toujours de la conscience divine comme si vous la connaissiez à fond" (CCM, 97). He does not see how Blondel can explain in Jesus the simultaneous consciousness of his double intellect and his double will. Blondel must know what is eternity since he wrote on the divine consciousness. Loisy never claimed to find at the origins of Christian development the definitive and adequate expression of revealed truth: this was exactly his criticism of Harnack. But there is a distinction between the problems of history and the problems of faith:

> S'il s'agit de la détermination historique, il n'y a pas lieu de traiter les Evangiles autrement que n'importe quelle source historique. Et cela n'est pas nier implicitement le surnaturel chrétien. Vous en venez tout simplement à supprimer les Evangiles comme livres historiques, et vous ne vous apercevez pas que vous voulez, comme les autres théologiens, m'obliger à retrouver dans les textes ce qui n'y est pas, me contraindre à torturer les Synoptiques pour leur faire dire ce qui est dans saint Jean; et vous prétendez, comme les autres, que, en prenant les Synoptiques selon leur sens historique, je nie la légitimité johannique, alors que tous mes efforts tendent à prouver que cette interprétation est légitime, et que le développement dogmatique, commandé par la foi, s'est opéré dans la foi et ne lui est pas extérieur. Si c'est tout ce que votre philosophie peut me donner, je la remercie de son concours (CCM, 97-98).

After an interruption of his letter, Loisy continues with less vim, but no less resolution. The case of the fourth Gospel seems clear to him. It is not a question of ontological, but of moral incompatibilities between the Synoptics and the fourth Gospel which lead him to conclude to the non-historical character of the latter. From a non-historical book, the historian cannot derive historical information: "Ce n'est pas l'incompatibilité de l'idée johannique avec le fait synoptique qui est le critérium, c'est que l'idée johannique est une idée, et que cette idée est visiblement étrangère à la tradition proprement historique de l'Evangile" (CCM, 98).[1]

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[1] Contemporary biblical scholars understand differently the historical nature of the Gospels than Loisy did at the beginning of this century. Neither the Synoptics are said to be pure history, nor the fourth Gospel simply theology, as Loisy presumed; but they are all kerygmatic interpretations of history, witnessing to various trends of Christian tradition.

Loisy claims that he never denied the divinity of Christ. He simply excluded from his historical investigation texts which he considered as non-historical. He is opposed neither to the legitimacy of the christological development, nor to the necessity to keeping its interpretation up-to-date. Blondel's objections stem from his ignorance of the historical value of the Gospel testimonies: "Ce qui est sorti de l'Evangile nous révèle la puissance infinie qui était dans l'oeuvre de Jésus, mais la détermination de la forme initiale et concrète de cette oeuvre ne peut se faire que par les textes qui réflètent immédiatement l'enseignement et l'action du Sauveur" (CCM, 98). Blondel tries to save faith at the expense of history, and thus ends by undermining even faith: "Si vous négligez ou rejetez cette forme historique, vous perdez l'appui de la réalité, et vous invitez, sans le vouloir, l'historien à trouver qu'on ne sait rien de consistant sur l'apparition historique de Jésus" (CCM, 98). While christology interprets faith in the divinity of Christ, there is no metaphysical christology as such in the historical Gospel and the historian cannot read one in the latter. Finally, Loisy mentions Bishop Turinaz' condemnation of L'Evangile et l'Eglise.[1]

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[1] In 1902, Bishop Turinaz of Nancy wrote Les périls de la foi et de la discipline dans l'Eglise de France à l'heure actuelle, in which he condemned Americanism, modern philosophy, positive theology, modern critical methods applied to biblical

On February 24, Dabry wrote to Paul Sabatier: "Si je me sentais les reins solides, je ferais de l'affaire Loisy une sorte d'affaire Dreyfus dans le catholicisme" (see HDC, 21).

Blondel was quite embarrassed in writing his response to Loisy. On February 26, he drew two rough drafts. In the first one, he wrote:

> Je regrette, pour moi et même un peu pour vous, d'avoir manqué ma destinée: si, au lieu de me faire contre vous l'avocat "emballé" du diable et de provoquer vos justifications par mes critiques injustement tendancieuses, j'avais à manier les clefs de Saint Pierre et l'anneau du Pêcheur, il est problable que, même sans vous donner le Chapeau, j'aurais--les lumières de Dieu aidant--plus de facilités pour recueillir vos leçons, en leur sens authentique et salutaire. En tout cas, j'userais, dans mes jugements d'une circonspection à laquelle je ne me suis pas cru tenu dans une lettre intime où j'ai voulu jouer le role ingrat de vous faire comprendre l'inintelligence de vos censeurs. Si j'ai pu, de quelque façon, aggraver par là vos ennuis, j'en éprouve un sincère regret, et je vous en demande cordialement pardon. C'est tout l'objet de ce billet (Unpublished in AB).

In the second draft, he begins again jokingly: were he the pope, he would create Loisy cardinal, as Leo XIII did to protect Newman, using the hat of Cardinal Perraud who

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exegesis and church history, and ecclesiastical conventions. In 1903, he wrote La vraie méthode des études ecclésiastiques, in which he declared that Loisy's method was neither Catholic, nor Christian, nor historical, nor critical, nor scientific. See HDC, 137-139.

survived seasickness on his return from Rome where he had gone to press for Loisy's condemnation. Blondel asks Loisy's forgiveness for his stupidity: "Surtout je regrette d'avoir, en jouant, dans une lettre qui n'était point du tout *ex cathedra*, le rôle d'avocat du diable, risqué d'agacer vos nerfs; vous n'aviez pas besoin de moi pour comprendre l'inintelligence de vos censeurs." Even on the points on which Blondel agrees with Loisy, as a philosopher he claims the right to make distinctions and to raise objections.

On February 27, Blondel drew a third draft which was mistaken for the final copy and published as such in *CCM*, 99-103. Blondel pleads for philosophy dethroned by history. The new queen should listen to the old one uttering "ses derniers *mais*, parmi beaucoup d'*amen*." Blondel lists ten points on which he agrees wholeheartedly with Loisy, but he makes exceptions for the possibility of a wrong interpretation of each. They are all formulated in this fashion: "Quand vous dites ... j'abonde en votre sens ... mais, dans la mesure où vous sembleriez laisser croire ... je ferais encore mes réserves." The ten *Amens* and *buts* are the following:

(1) historical description is distinct from definitions of faith, but history cannot be the only source for theology;

(2) the Synoptics can be treated as historical sources

to determine the historical image of Jesus, but they are not the only source for the knowledge of Jesus' consciousness;

(3) the fourth Gospel gives ideas and not facts, but there are different kinds of facts and different kinds of history: the Synoptics gives the externally observed facts while the fourth Gospel gives the internally intuited facts;

(4) the results of the Gospel reveal the infinite power of Jesus' work, but the Church owes its origin and development to the perpetual action of Christ and not to the book of the New Testament;

(5) the Christian supernatural does not depend on the historical knowledge of the Gospels, but there must be some elements of metaphysical christology in the Gospels to account for the passage from history to authentic theology;

(6) a better historical knowledge of the Gospel should influence the notion of the Christian supernatural and rejuvenate theology and piety, but history alone cannot suffice to account for doctrinal developments;

(7) the determination of the consciousness of Christ is not as important to history as the notion of Christ is to faith, but the notion of Christ is not independent of the idea that Christ had of himself;

(8) theology has not yet solved the psychological mode of the adoption of a human consciousness by God, but it has solved

the question of the divinity of Christ;

(9) the historical Christ was simple and not at all mysterious, but even then he was not understood completely by his first simple disciples;

(10) the Gospels imply that Christ was conscious of living in God, as christology tries to explain, but this "participation in the life of God" cannot be considered a simple historical fact without any elements of metaphysical christology.

Offended by Loisy's intimation that he is familiar with the divine consciousness and eternity, Blondel claims that he simply denied the possibility of our perfect knowledge of time and the human soul. He adds: "J'ai donc repoussé, non par de la lumière, mais par de l'ombre vos objections contre l'union hypostatique; car des preuves négatives impliquent une science plus parfaite que n'en exigeraient des arguments positifs: une impossibilité est plus malaisée à prouver qu'une réalité" (CCM, 102). According to Blondel, the hypostatic union is no greater mystery than the coexistence of God and the world. Loisy is not obliged to find in texts what is not there, but he should not exclude in the name of texts some realities of another order.

Blondel summarizes his three aporiai as follows: (1) Loisy is not clear on the relations between history and theology;

(2) he does not provide a criterion to judge the legitimacy of the christological development; (3) he does not clearly state the organon for the renewal of theology by history.

The final copy of this letter which Blondel sent to Loisy on February 27 is about forty lines shorter than his third rough draft published in CCM, 99-103, manifests over two dozen corrections for style, and contains substantially the same agreements and disagreements. Blondel accepts all the historical premises and conclusions of Loisy, but he feels the insufficiency of these to determine doctrinal developments and to explain faith in the divinity of Christ. Finally, he informs Loisy that he will write the following note to Wehrlé: "D'une lettre reçue de M. l'abbé Loisy, il résulte que je puis souscrire presque à toutes ses affirmations dans la mesure même où il reste placé sur le terrain de l'abstraction historique. Et, il est fécond de s'y placer provisoirement pour renouveler les perspectives théologiques et éthiques. Le reste est méthodologie, c'est-à-dire, discussion philosophique en matière libre" (LOI, 26).

The following day, on February 28, Blondel sent to Wehrlé Loisy's letter of February 22, and his own response to it. It was Wehrlé who engaged Blondel in this polemic with Loisy. Blondel would prefer to continue his polemic with Gayraud which was much easier. He does not quite understand

Loisy's distinctions: "Qu'est-ce que cette opposition entre 'la détermination de la conscience du Christ' qui est accessoire, et la 'notion du Christ' qui est importante" Oui ou non, le Christ a-t-il eu une conscience obnubilée ou divine? Me trompé-je, en posant avec cette carrure de béotien une telle question, cette question qu'on prétend étrangère à la tradition et encore théologiquement indéterminée?" (BV, 113).

Blondel will tend now to harden Loisy's distinctions into oppositions. On the same day, February 28, he informed Laberthonnière of his confidential correspondence with Loisy and Hügel. He views them as anti-scholastics, still very scholastic, victims of intellectualism and historicism which he defines in the following manner:

> Prendre les faits historiques sous leur aspect objectif, c'est-à-dire ne voir dans les réalitiés concrètes que ce qui est représenté, exprimé, en un mot le portrait; et puis prendre ce portrait qui sans doute est un facsimilé de la chose, sans être cependant rien de la chose même, pour un morceau de la réalité, que dis-je? pour la réalité agissante. C'est ainsi que le Christ des Synoptiques est le seul Christ historique, et que ce Christ historique est le principe de l'Eglise. Tout procède, non de sa vie intérieure, perpetuée, restituée, mais de la connaissance qui s'en est transmise à travers mille transformations intellectuelles (BL, 159-160).

Blondel seems to forget that both Loisy and Hügel rejected such an interpretation of their historical studies. Blondel's main objection against Loisy remains the absence of prolegomena to all sacred exegesis and the absence of a non-scholastic philosophy.

On March 1, Wehrlé answered Blondel. He does not need the latter's praise of Hügel's character and scholarship. Blondel should remain above the question of personalities in this complex crisis in which the dearest friendships should be sacrificed to the superior interests of Truth. The authority of God within and the authority of the Church without require a perfect conformity: "Si cette double conformité--parfaitement unique en son fond--est au prix de la 'circoncision du coeur,' nous ferons saigner notre coeur. Nous n'en serons que plus agréables à Dieu et utiles à ceux-là mêmes que nous aurons contredits" (*CCM*, 149 and *BV*, 114). It is preferable to please God and the Church than friends.

On the one hand, Blondel held strongly to traditional Christian faith; on the other, he was quite unsatisfied with its scholastic formulation. He spoke of the subjective act of faith as "foi-confiance" and of the objective scholastic formulation of it as "foi-croyance." On March 1, he proposed the following problem to Wehrlé:

> Quelle doctrine proposer pour relier la *foi-confiance* à la *foi-croyance*, et pour déterminer l'échelle mobile qui permet d'accéder de l'une à l'autre; comment, *la seconde étant fausse, la première peut être vraie, quoique ne pouvant se passer provisoirement de la seconde*; de quelle manière expliquer le raccord de la Révélation objective avec la foi-confiance et même avec la foi-croyance implicite et inexacte ... En somme, la grande difficulté dans l'*oeuvre de transposition et de rénovation intégrale*, c'est de marquer le juste rôle de la pensée dans la vie, de la connaissance par rapport à la réalité, de la Révélation comme

> expression et véhicule de la Rédemption, sans dissocier ce qui est normalement uni, mais aussi sans assujetir le principal à l'accessoire, les conditions actuelles aux consommations futures, et les devoirs communs aux grâces des privilégiés, le _quoad_ _nos_ à l'_in_ _se_ (_LP_, 218-219; the underlining of the French is mine).

According to Blondel, there was need of an integral renovation and transposition of Christian doctrine from the naive realism of scholastic formulations to new thought patterns, less unfaithful to revelation. Revelation itself would be simply an expression and a vehicule for redemption. Christian belief (_foi_-_croyance_), expressed in scholastic terminology, might be false, while Christian faith (_foi_-_confiance_) remains true, even though Christian faith cannot provisionally dispense with some kind of belief. Intellectual knowledge is but one aspect of life.

On March 2, Loisy answered Blondel. This letter, being the last of Loisy reproduced in _CCM_, 103-105, and very important for the clarification of his position, deserves to be reproduced here in its entirety, especially when his opponents would constantly disregard his distinctions and qualifications:

> J'ai toujours pensé que vous étiez philosophe, mais je voudrais savoir maintenant si vous êtes normand.
>
> (1) Je n'ai point dit et je ne pense pas que le portrait historique de Jésus fournisse tous les éléments d'une définition théologique du Christ. Pour le théologien d'aujourd'hui cette définition doit résulter de toute l'histoire chrétienne continuant celle du Christ, et non seulement de l'histoire de Jésus.

(2) Je vous laisse parfaitement libre de penser que vous avez un moyen extra-historique de définir historiquement la conscience de Jésus. Moi, historien, j'ignore ce moyen, et si je le connaissais, j'hésiterais à m'en servir, puisque ce ne serait pas un moyen d'histoire.[1]

(3) Il y a infiniment moins de psychologie dans saint Jean que dans les Synoptiques. Saint Jean n'a pas plus de psychologie que d'histoire; il a de la théologie mystique.--Je vais vous envoyer, *en tremblant* mon dernier ouvrage, en vous faisant observer qu'il n'est pas dans le commerce et que les 96 pages de préface de ces *Etudes bibliques* ne sont pas dans l'édition qui est en vente chez Picard. Vous garderez votre exemplaire pour vous et ne le prêterez pas. Il y a là, sur saint Jean, quelques pages qui pourront vous intéresser.--Le langage symbolique de saint Jean ne traduit que sa théologie, le Christ de sa foi.

(4) Je n'ai pas mis le Christ au sommet de l'histoire pour nier qu'il fût dedans; et je n'ai pas dit davantage qu'il fût le plus connu des hommes. Les expressions dont je me suis servi n'ont pas le sens tout extérieur (et inepte) que vous paraissez leur attribuer. Mais à prendre les choses par le dehors, Jésus est au sommet de l'histoire en tant qu'*influence incomparable et vérifiable*. Je n'ai pas à analyser la part qu'il a dans la vie intérieure de chaque chrétien, vu que cela n'est plus de l'histoire, mais de la psychologie individuelle. *C'est votre affaire*.

(5) Il n'y a pas de métaphysique--grecque--dans l'Evangile. Il y a l'idée que Jésus avait laissée de lui-même aux siens et je crois avoir exposé comment cette idée contient les éléments auxquels s'est rattachée, pour les interpréter et les développer, la théologie de

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[1] See *CCM*, 100, where Blondel wrote: "Dans la mesure où vous sembleriez laisser croire ou que dans ces témoignages il y a un moyen d'exhaustion pour le contenu réel de la conscience de Jésus, ou que nous n'avons pas d'autre moyen de connaître l'auteur du Christianisme que l'intelligence qu'en ont eue et exprimée ses premiers interprètes, je suspendrais mon adhésion." Earlier, on February 6, Blondel wrote: "Si le Christ s'est su Dieu, a-t-il su tout en Dieu?--Vous devinez déjà, par nos conversations de septembre à Quincy, vers quelle solution (*historiquement indémontrable*) j'inclinerais pour ma part" (*CCM*, 78).

Paul, de Jean, etc. J'ajoute que la foi des générations chrétiennes n'avait pas que la donnée historique comme point de départ (vous seriez capable de me le faire dire), mais l'Esprit du Christ vivant dans l'Eglise, cette réalité spirituelle, agissante, mystérieuse qui est le Christ immortel et la conscience chrétienne. La théologie interprète--ou devrait interpréter--constamment cette double donnée.

[Loisy, apparently, skipped over (6)]

(7) L'histoire n'a pas du tout le contrôle de la théologie; elle n'est qu'un témoin à interroger, mais le premier, et à l'heure présente le plus important, ou le plus urgent (je me défie de vous, et s'il me venait une troisième distinction, je la ferais, pour me garantir); toute la tradition est un témoin à interroger; le mouvement intellectuel contemporain est un témoin à interroger; le juge est la conscience chrétienne et l'Eglise. Supplions-la d'écouter les témoins. Et si vous n'êtes pas content cette fois, je vous abandonne à tous les démons de la scolastique, Gayraud et Cie.

(8) Vous me prenez pour un sot (et je n'en suis point flatté) en supposant que je pourrais admettre que la notion de foi au Christ peut être entièrement indépendante de l'idée qu'il a eue de lui-même.

(9) Je n'ai parlé que du mode psychologique d'adaptation de la conscience humaine du Christ. Quant à la mesure de liberté que la théologie laisse, *elle n'en sait rien*, car si vous le lui demandez, elle vous répondra qu'elle n'en laisse pas du tout, pour la raison bien simple qu'elle ne comprend pas pour le moment notre question.

(10) Vous me faites dire encore une bêtise en supposant que je ferais le Christ plus perméable au regard de ses disciples qu'un homme ne l'est à un autre homme. J'ai dit que le Christ ne faisait pas de mystères. Et je dis que l'historien ne peut connaître Jésus que d'après ce que les témoins nous en font connaître.--Je me demande avec anxiété pourquoi vous-même me supposez une intelligence plus bornée que celle du commun des mortels dépourvus de philosophie.

(11) La conscience de vie en Dieu est justement une des choses *impliquées* dans l'enseignement de Jésus; cette conscience peut être une chose très mystérieuse, en soi et pour nous, sans que l'enseignement du Christ ait été dépourvu de clarté. Communication d'esprit divin était une chose très simple pour les évangelistes, qui ne cherchaient pas au delà.

(12) Je crois avoir indiqué la suture de l'ordre théologique à l'ordre historique.[1]

(13) De même le critérium pour la légitimité du développement. Il n'y a pas critérium absolu et a priori pour la part que chacun peut prendre à ce développement. Cela est bon qui est retenu par la conscience chrétienne, reconnu par l'Eglise et qui contribue au progrès chrétien.[2]

(14) Vous devez voir par la façon dont j'entends 'le renouvellement de la théologie par l'histoire' quel peut être mon organon. C'est un outil très modeste et qui ne prétend pas faire de merveilles. Seulement un peu de besogne. Et encore! Je voudrais bien n'avoir jamais eu à m'en servir. Car il est dangereux pour ceux qui l'emploient.[3]

(15) Ouf! ... Si je soumettais à une critique vingt fois moins exigente et tracassière que la vôtre les écrits de ceux qui ont refuté mon malheureux livre, ils passeraient un mauvais quart d'heure. Mais cela ne m'amuserait pas, et je les laisse en paix.

Ayez pitié du volume que je vous envoie, et surtout ne le montrez pas.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments respectueux.

A. Loisy.

In 1900, the Institut Catholique of Paris proposed an essay-contest for the Hugues prize on the following topic: to seek in post-Kantian philosophy the new resources for a rational explanation of the genesis and the characteristics of the act of supernatural faith. The prize was won in 1901 by Canon Gombault. In 1902 and 1903, he published his doctoral dissertation in a series of fourteen articles in La Science Catholique.[1] Gombault reminded his readers that Luther dissociated faith and reason, that Kant emancipated reason, and that Blondel, in their footsteps, tolled the bell for the scholastic philosophy. The method of immanence, at the heart of the Blondelian philosophy, was condemned twice by the Church, wrote Gombault: the first time when in 1827 the Critique of Pure Reason was placed on the Index; the second time, by the first Vatican council. Gombault concluded his fifth article by transforming Blondel into a Lutheran philosopher: "On ne peut nier que Maurice Blondel ait recueilli pieusement dans l'héritage de Kant, la part de philosophisme protestant qui se rapportait à ses conceptions sur la philosophie nouvelle. Maurice Blondel est, du reste, un admirateur de Luther, vu, non des hauteurs théologiques, mais des sommets philosophiques" (p. 1094).

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[1] See MEM-II, 229, where Loisy comments: "Mon livre préparait des transpositions dont Blondel ne voit pas la nécessité, ou qu'il opère presque inconsciemment dans la mesure assez restreinte où il les opère."

[2] In an issue of The Ecumenist, in 1966, Gregory Baum explained the meaning of "infallibility" in the determination of doctrinal development in very similar terms.

[3] See MEM-II, 229, where Loisy described this organon as "la connaissance positive et philosophique de l'histoire, de l'homme dans l'histoire."

On March 4, Blondel asked Laberthonnière for some clue to solve the christological problem on which he believes that

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[1] 16 (1902), 577-595; 697-717; 865-874; 961-975; 1080-1094; 17 (1902), 5-18; 17 (1903), 97-114; 193-207; 314-327; 487-499; 571-592; 687-702; 757-772; 825-839.

Loisy floundered. He has just read the first articles of Gombault who appears to him as a Jansenist (LAB, 133). The next day, Wehrlé consoled Blondel: "Ne vous étonnez pas des attaques dont vous êtes l'objet. Il n'y a rien en vous de luthérien, et, pour que votre oeuvre soit celle de Dieu, il faut qu'elle soit contredite, combattue et calomniée" (BV, 118).

On March 7, Blondel answered Loisy.[1] He rectifies Loisy's information: he was not born in Normandy, but in Burgundy, not far from the birthplace of Bossuet [the intransigent opponent of Richard Simon]. He thanks Loisy for the unpublished 96 pages of his introduction to Etudes bibliques. He read them twice with increasing admiration and satisfaction. His earlier objections were meant to express mainly the hasty and false interpretations that could be given to Loisy's thought, not always fully and explicitly formulated in his books. Blondel believes that once the principles, the method, and the complete works of Loisy become known, they will certainly be approved. The philosopher of Aix summarizes his two impressions: one of enthusiasm for Loisy's scientific work, and one of uneasiness and invincible resistance in the presence of what he suspects a deficient Christian faith.

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[1] See CCM, 105, where the compiler presents it as the last letter of Blondel to Loisy while there is still another published in CCM, 199-201.

First, in the introduction to Etudes bibliques, Blondel discovered the same views, method, and spirit which inspire him: "Vous exposez des choses qui ne peuvent pas ne pas être admises un jour. En nous faisant considérer l'histoire religieuse comme un immense effort progressif de l'humanité entière, et en étendant, de la Bible et de l'Evangile comme centre de perspective, notre horizon jusqu'aux confins des siècles et des races, vous égalez enfin le Catholicisme à son idée" (CCM, 106-107). He admires the spectacle of a Bible and a Church at the same time more human and more divine.

Secondly, Blondel comes back to his unique and fundamental objection against Loisy: the problem of Jesus' consciousness: "Et puisque vous dites que ce problème relève non de la science du critique, mais de la foi de l'homme (p.34), permettez que ma foi d'homme proteste contre ce que j'ai cru deviner (sans doute à tort) de votre foi d'homme" (CCM, 107). Blondel has doubts on the orthodoxy of Loisy's personal faith. He is aware that history alone cannot prove the reality of the supernatural and that philosophy cannot prove either its possibility or its impossibility. Consequently, Loisy should not write history in such a way as to render historically impossible truths required by faith. Since Loisy mocked him for claiming to have some extra-historical means to define historically Jesus' consciousness, Blondel makes three observations; (1) Loisy *says* that history alone cannot solve this question, yet he *acts* as if he limited himself to history; (2) while Loisy spoke of defining *historically* Jesus' consciousness, Blondel maintains that the historical data are limited to the consciousness which the first interpreters had of Jesus' consciousness, that the definition of a consciousness is not properly a matter of history, and that some other means are required to reconcile history and theology; (3) Loisy does not seem to know of any science to reconcile history and theology. This is the fundamental objection:

> Si la science chrétienne ne se passe pas de son appui historique, l'histoire ne saurait sans nous conduire au naufrage de la foi se passer de la science chrétienne; j'entends par ces mots les résultats méthodiquement acquis par l'expérimentation collective de l'Evangile pratiqué, du Christ réalisé et vérifié en nous ... Ce n'est ni par la théologie scolastique, ni par l'histoire que s'opère le raccord normal de l'histoire avec la théologie. Et tant que l'on n'aura point défini, entre elles deux, une science capable de dégager, au profit d'une théologie expérimentale et progressive les leçons tirées de l'histoire par la vie, il n'y aura que conflits toujours renaissants et tentatives d'empiétements ou d'ostracisme mutuels. Vous direz peut-être que je vous reproche encore de ne pas mettre *ma* philosophie dans *votre* histoire. Non; je vous demande seulement de ne pas dénaturer le sens de ma philosophie en restreignant "mon affaire" à la *psychologie individuelle*, et de ne pas tendre à supprimer l'utilité de cette philosophie, en méconnaissant que pour enrichir notre science des faits historiques et de leur contenu réel nous pouvons les reproduire et les expérimenter en nous. Nulle part vous ne manifestez, partout vous écartez la prétention d'épuiser la vie religieuse dans l'histoire et par l'histoire; ne trouvez donc pas mauvais que je cherche des "moyens extra-historiques" de déterminer la vie religieuse de Jésus, cette participation au divin dont le mystère subsiste à votre regard d'historien comme à mon coeur d'homme et à ma foi de chrétien (*CCM*, 109).

Blondel wants to develop a "Christian science" to effect the normal relations between scholastic theology and history, which neither of these two are capable of. We can see at this point, that Blondel has modified his criticism of scholasticism; previously, he wanted to reject the whole scholastic system. He realizes now that the majority of ecclesiastical leaders have linked Christian orthodoxy with the scholastic system in theology. Since Blondel was asked to be more Catholic and more traditional, he accepts now the scholastic theology. He does not want, however, the a priori theologism of the scholastics, nor the adogmatic approach of the critical historians. In order to reconcile both, he speaks of a "Christian science," the science which would synthesize the "results methodically acquired by the collective experimentation of the Gospel practices, of Christ realized and verified in the life of every Christian," in sum, a science of Christian tradition. With such a science, as a basis, he would like to see the development of an experimental and progressive theology. He is offended that Loisy seemed to reduce the philosophy of L'Action to the realm of individual psychology. Since Loisy acknowledged that history alone does not exhaust the intelligence of the religious life, Blondel insists that he must find some extra-historical means to determine the religious life of Jesus. Becoming very personal, Blondel opposes his human heart and his Christian faith to Loisy's competence as an historian.

Once again, Blondel objects to what he suspects to be a deficiency in the orthodoxy of Loisy's faith: "Oui ou non, croyez-vous que Jésus a eu, par devers lui, le sentiment, la claire possession de sa Divinité?" (CCM, 110). The extra-historical answer to that question would modify the tone of Loisy's history, the principle of his criticism, and the synthesis of his doctrine. Blondel is sure, however, that nothing in Loisy's work implies such a faith against Faith.

In a postscript, Blondel regrets having written of Loisy's "faith against Faith." He recognizes that Jesus' consciousness is not a problem for objective history: "C'est parce que j'avais cru comprendre que votre façon de procéder entrainait une Christologie contestable, que j'avais d'abord cherché un vice de méthode" (CCM, 111; the underlining is mine). The whole Christian tradition needs to be consulted for the elaboration of christology: "Car enfin l'Eglise ne témoigne pas en l'air, ses constructions ne sont pas des échafaudages artificiels, et l'enveloppe de la ratiocination scolastique n'est qu'un vêtement très contingent, très partiel, très éphémère, qui ne doit pas nous rendre injustes pour la solide trame de la vie et du dogme catholiques, lequel dogme a toujours été vécu, ce semble, avant d'être pensé" (CCM, 111). Blondel recognizes that Loisy did not separate in the fourth Gospel what is mystical theology from what is history and psychology.

Loisy did not answer this letter. When he recalled it in his Mémoires, twenty-eight years later, he wrote: "Si la foi postule des faits dont l'attestation est essentiellement fictive, tant pis pour la foi. Ceci n'est pas une méthode, c'est le renversement de la raison au profit d'un mysticisme visionnaire" (MEM-11, 230).

On March 1 and 5, Wehrlé sent to Blondel two long "epistles" on St. Paul and christology (Unpublished in AB). Mentally bruised by his correspondance with Loisy, Blondel wrote back with relief to Wehrlé on March 8. Loisy's writings, he says, certainly do not encourage those old "little virtues" which are nevertheless responsible for the odium theologicum. In order to vindicate the essential, Blondel claims that he was hilarem datorem with Loisy. He adds that the latter's 96 pages of introduction to Etudes bibliques are very beautiful and well balanced in their extreme daring. If only Loisy could liberate himself from his "faith against Faith": "Ah! si M. Loisy pouvait en ôter l'épine envenimée, s'il reconnaissait que c'est là, dans sa doctrine, un élément étranger, une erreur adventice dont la seule présence empoisonne tout le reste."[1]

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[1] CCM, 113; this letter was chopped up, a section published here on pages 112-113; another on page 149; two others on pages 256 and 257; and others left unpublished.

Since Blondel lost faith in the orthodoxy of Loisy's faith, he believes that someone else in the Church will need to replace him:

> Et l'oeuvre qu'il a faite reste à faire sans lui. Que ce spectacle d'un si fécond effort et d'un si terrible échec est donc instructif et douloureux! Au fond, ce qui perd cet esprit exceptionnellement perspicace et concret, c'est une sorte de cécité et un abus de l'abstraction. Il ne voit pas la réalité affective et morale; il ne conçoit l'expérience religieuse que comme une fantaisie individuelle; et après avoir reconnu en thèse idéale, la légitimité du magistère de l'Eglise, il lui enlève tout fondement et toute autorité effective. J'avoue que son attitude, par les déclarations contradictoires qui mettent sans cesse aux prises sa pratique et sa théorie, me déconcerte, au point que je doute de mon bon sens et que je me demande très sincèrement: "Est-ce donc moi qui en effet suis inept et sot?" Et j'en viens, lisant un homme qu'on dit si spirituel, à ne plus sentir le sel même de ses plaisanteries, non plus que le sens de ses distinctions et de ses rectifications. La nuit dernière, j'en ai eu un pittoresque cauchemar: visant une figure géométrique, je n'atteignais qu'un nuage et moins encore" (Partly published in CCM, 113).

Blondel has been unable to understand Loisy's distinctions which gave him nightmares. He cannot reconcile Loisy's practice with his theory; if Loisy admits the legitimacy of the Magisterium, he should be willing to subject his critical studies to that Magisterium. In the same letter, Blondel deplores the accusations of Gombault against him, accusing Gombault in return of unconscious Jansenism and baroque Naturalism:

> Admettre que la Rédemption effective a amené en définitive une recrudescence de difficultés et formalités du salut; croire que la question du salut se tranche, pour les ignorants, par la médiation de la seule morale naturelle; supposer que tout ce qui, après la promulgation, n'a pas été matériellement baptisé ou désireux

> du baptême matériel, est gibier d'enfer: c'est là, franchement, un tissu de monstruosités. Nous mourrons de ces chinoiseries chronologiques, géographiques et scholastiques, qui loin de défendre la thèse nécessaire de la Révélation et de la Rédemption positives, de la grâce et de ses canaux sacramentels, de l'Eglise et de sa matérialité bienfaisante, nous rejettent de Charybde en Scylla, et compensent une sottise par une sottise (Partly published in CCM, 256-257).

Blondel appreciated Wehrlé's long dissertation on St. Paul. Yet this favorable attitude did not prevent him from raising a series of objections which developed in subsequent letters into what the compiler of CCM called "une guerre amicale de religion" (see chapter 7). The problem raised by Wehrlé consists in showing the universal judicature of Catholicism without compromising the particularism of its forms and institutions. Blondel's own effort aims in the same direction: to maintain Christian monism while avoiding the dissolution of the pusillus grex which is the continuing incarnation of the Saviour. On the universal restoration in Christ, Blondel wonders if the Incarnation should not be considered as part of the natural plan of Creation, while the supernatural order would begin when man is elevated from his slavish and created condition to a participation in the Incarnation itself, to profit of the hypostatic union, to become a son, heir, brother, and mother of God. Philosophy would then be called upon to justify this monism, this "Panchristisme," this receptacle for supernatural gifts. In this fashion, St. Thomas' antinomy could be solved: on the one hand, man has a natural desire to know God; on the other, the desire for beatitude is already supernatural. The supernatural character of such a desire does not consist in the metaphysical knowledge, even of the ontological role of the Mediator, but in the pact of love which creates above the normal order a new reign of grace and free intimacy with God.

As Blondel does not want to identify revelation with redemption, he refuses to accept Wehrlé's statement: "Tout homme qui contredit la formule se condamne lui-même, puisqu'il connaît la formule, donc l'Eglise, et puisque l'auscultation intérieure doit lui révéler inévitablement la nécessité d'y adhérer" (CCM, 256). This attitude, according to Blondel, bases everything on knowledge; furthermore, it is quite possible to have a falsified image of the Church and to be justified in rejecting it. Blondel does not insist on this insufficiently expressed opinion: "Avec plus de vérité qu'à M. Loisy, je vous dirai donc que je prêche un converti--et mon convertisseur" (Unpublished section in AB). Blondel shares Wehrlé's opposition to Hügel's proposed renewal of christology: "Prétendre à la fois réformer la notion de Jésus en ce point et rester fidèlement incorporé au grand courant vital de l"Eglise, me parait, malgré moi, un prodige sur lequel j'hésite presque à ouvrir les yeux. Je n'ai d'ailleurs pas encore reçu de réponse d'Angleterre. Même si l'on a communiqué ma lettre à

Bellevue, je ne pense pas que M. Loisy puisse s'en froisser; tout au plus pourra-t-il penser que je radote. Votre voeu sera exaucé; car enfin il m'estime 'ineptement' orthodoxe" (Partly published in CCM,149; the underlining is mine). Blondel was very concerned to appear "orthodox" in the eyes of all persons involved in the crisis.

On the same day, March 8, Blondel appears to have forgotten all the clarifications of Loisy's last letter of March 2 when he writes to Mourret:

> J'ai perdu, tout au moins usé beaucoup de temps dans une polémique très secrète avec M. Loisy; et ce n'est pas fini. Mais cet échange de vues me sert à préciser ce que j'aurai à dire de cette grave question de la méthode de l'exégèse. En somme, M. L. me semble être encore la victime de cet intellectualisme qui prend le portrait historique pour un morceau de la réalité, pour la réalité même, tandis qu'il est à côté de la réalité comme un substitut artificiel; tout au moins il n'admet pratiquement aucun autre moyen de connaître authentiquement Jésus que l'analyse régressive de l'historien; il ne se doute pas de la puissance de vérification, d'investigation, de résurrection que renferme l'expérimentation morale, l'effort séculaire de la chrétienté pour éprouver et traduire la vie religieuse de Jésus (CCM, 112 and BV, 113).

On March 13, Blondel informed Wehrlé that Loisy did not answer his last letter. Consequently, he will not take the initiative of troubling again his silence (see BV, 113). On March 15, Wehrlé answered: "Je n'apprécie pas plus que vous son esprit, qui est tout juste de l'esprit de petit séminaire, et je ne comprends pas plus que vous ses distinctions, qui sont beaucoup plus scolastiques dans leur idéologisme outrancier, avec la prétention surnuméraire de traduire des réalités vivantes" (BV, 113). Wehrlé thanks Blondel for having discovered the flaw and the principle of intoxication in Loisy. Blondel's identification of the historical abstraction of a christology in L'Evangile et L'Eglise with a deficiency in Loisy's personal faith, and his "discovery" that "il n'y avait pas plus dans la pensée de l'auteur que dans le contenu apparent de l'oeuvre" disenchanted completely Wehrlé from his original admiration for Loisy. No longer will he be able to view that famous book, supposedly written with a Christian postulate, as a major justification for the Church and as a work more Catholic than Christian (see CCM, 113). One remembers that Wehrlé had qualified earlier Blondel's philosophy as more Christian than Catholic and encouraged him to seek the approbation of the Church and to obtain an Imprimatur for his next book (see BV, 81).

The next day, March 16, Wehrlé contradicted Blondel's devaluation of revelation and dogmatic formulations in favor of a universal redemption: "Je ne voudrais pas non plus que vous finissiez par donner à toute l'humanité extérieurement dissidente une absolution totale qui ressemblerait fort à une condamnation de Dieu et à une négation de tout péché haïssable" (CCM, 258). Conscious of his priestly responsibility, Wehrlé makes two observations: (1) the mass of simple souls, priests and laymen, deserve as much indulgence and attention as those outside the Church, even though they do not always understand the problems which preoccupy the scholars; (2) even when the concessions of charity have been satisfied, there will always be crimes which deserve outright condemnation. Wehrlé reminds Blondel that objections raised against Christianity are not always due to its external presentation and visible forms, but sometimes to the internal resistance of ill-disposed persons: "Et si nous devons traiter avec mansuétude les personnes qui lui font ainsi la guerre, nous devons néanmoins les combattre et condamner le principe de leur opposition" (CCM, 259).

The following day, March 17 (CCM, 260 has March 19 by error), Wehrlé completed his remarks. First, the Church is responsible for the doctrine of salvation even though theology is not yet adequate. Secondly, a more satisfactory theology will never eliminate the mystery of predestination and redemption. Wehrlé is not favorable to the universalist views of Blondel:

> Pratiquement, il faut réagir contre la hantise universaliste qui n'est censée ouvrir le coeur à tous les hommes que pour le fermer plus sûrement à Dieu et aux chrétiens. Le caractère tout personnel et incommunicable du salut fait que, pour toute conscience où L'Evangile a été promulgué, la question qui prime tout est l'obligation de le vivre, avant même de chercher à savoir comment il atteint les autres. Attendre, pour commencer à faire son salut, de savoir comment s'opère celui de l'univers, c'est risquer d'aboutir à une catastrophe (CCM, 260).

Thirdly, for Wehrlé, there is an actual and real difference between believers and unbelievers, between the city of God and the city of Satan.

Wehrlé fears that Blondel's method of immanence might devaluate the necessity of the Church proposing from the outside the object of revelation; consequently, he proposes a way according to which the method of immanence will dispose minds and ears eager for truth and love to come to the threshold of the Church and to listen there to the Word of Life: "Jamais donc nous n'insisterons trop sur l'importance de la réalité sociale du christianisme, et jamais nous n'affirmerons trop que le catholicisme est la seule forme légitime et intelligible du christianisme" (CCM, 260).[1]

On March 18, Blondel answered in a short note. He has just read the conferences of Lagrange given at Toulouse on the historical method.[2] Blondel expresses his first impression:

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[1] The interpretation of Blondel's philosophy as "une apologétique du seuil," expressed here for the first time by Wehrlé, was later continued by Montcheuil, de Lubac, Bouillard, Hayen, and lately by Saint-Jean. In 1961, Hayen compared the philosophy of Maurice Blondel with that of Jacques Maritain: "La philosophie blondélienne est un philosophie de conversion; celle de Maritain, une philosophie de converti...nous discernons aussi la "supériorité' de la philosophie du converti sur celle de la conversion: celle-ci mène au seuil de l'Eglise; celle-là se déploie dans L'Eglise" (see A. Hayen, "Philosophie de conversion, philosophie de converti," L'Ami du clergé, 71 (1961), 705-712.

[2] See La Méthode historique, surtout dans l'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament (Paris: Lecoffre, 1903).

"En somme les hardiesses définitives s'y trouvent, sous des clauses protocolaires dont beaucoup sont légitimes, dont quelques-unes sont contestables; tout au moins on peut regretter qu'elles soient nécessaires" (CCM, 154; see HDC, 387).

On March 19, Blondel wrote again to Wehrlé. He informs him that he wrote ten days earlier an article in L'Univers under the name of his brother-in-law, Adéodat Boissard. He grants to Wehrlé that as much charity is due to those within the Church as to those outside. It is true that Christ condemned the "world," but the "world" is not so much outside the Church as it is an attitude within each man. The enemies of the Church, no less than some anti-catholic Catholics are responsible for the present crisis. There will not be any immediate Catholic victory in France. Before the future renaissance can become a reality, a general collapse will come about, and the passing away of certain intransigent spokesmen, such as Father Bailly, Father Monsabré, and Bishop Turinaz.[1]

Again on March 19, Laberthonnière wrote to Blondel:

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[1] Bailly was the director of the daily La Croix which spread antisemitism in every French parish during the "affaire Dreyfus," opposed the papal policy of "ralliement," and pursued anyone suspect of "Modernism"; Monsabré, a famous preacher, called upon the pope, as the supreme general of the Catholics, to begin a new crusade; Turinaz, the conservative bishop of Nancy, campaigned against all modern ideas.

"J'achève de lire La Méthode historique du P. Lagrange. Dans l'ensemble, je trouve cela faible. L'auteur ne sait ni penser ni écrire. Il en est à croire que philosophie et théologie sont des affaires de sens commun. Il attend tout de l'histoire. Et dans ces conditions, il ne sait guère ce qu'il y a à chercher. Il est certain que Loisy est un autre homme."[1]

Blondel answered Laberthonnière the following day: "Je viens de lire La Méthode historique de P. Lagrange. Je ne sais si l'Imprimatur a déjà consacré d'aussi grandes hardiesses; il a fallu les racheter par le couplet contre le Kantisme, et par d'autres clauses protocolaires, dont on peut regretter qu'elles soient nécessaires ou même qu'elles paraissent bonnes à l'auteur" (LAB, 133).

On March 20 and 22, Hügel wrote a long letter to Laberthonnière. After a few words of praise for the latter's article on "Les études historiques et l'apologétique," Hügel deplores the present conflict between his two friends, Loisy and Blondel. He deplores in particular Blondel's ignorance of biblical problems and proposes to answer the latter's recent letter. He hopes that Blondel will not place at the core of his next book the notion of a Christ whose consciousness would be fully explicit and equivalent to the consciousness of all men from the beginning to the end of time. Such a non-historical view can please only one who has built for himself a metaphysical shelter. Hügel, no less than Loisy, is not opposed to metaphysics as such, nor does he view history abstracted from any metaphysics. Both he and Loisy are opposed only to any metaphysics which contradicts or neglects history:

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[1] See J. Steinmann, Friedrich von Hügel (Paris: Aubier, 1962), p. 151. According to Steinmann, Lagrange escaped condemnation during the French Modernist crisis, in part because of his espousing the Thomist philosophy and theology, and in part because of his being far away in Jerusalem. He was nevertheless attacked, insulted, and requested by Rome to limit his exegetical work to the Old Testament.

> Et si la métaphysique scolastique est devenue pour tout travailleur pleinement conscient de son objet réel et des méthodes requises, une impossibilité et un danger; et si la réaction, tout impossible qu'elle est, contre toute métaphysique, est très compréhensible et en partie inspirée, sans doute, par un instinct de tactique, je voudrais beaucoup éviter à m'encourager à une autre métaphysique, qu'elle fût aussi différente de la scolastique que vous voulez, qui après tout, elle aussi, éliminerait le contact, la coopération constitutive avec l'histoire. Car nous ne pouvons point être satisfait avec une liberté de recherches qui serait achetée au prix de ne pouvoir rien apporter à l'acte constitutif de notre certitude, de notre monde religieux et moral. Sans métaphysique, nulle histoire dignement humaine et signifiante: oui. Mais aussi sans le contact avec les faits historiques, sans conviction que l'évidence historique, même pour, et dans l'acte de croyance, --acte qui toujours dépasse et interprète ces faits,-- élimine la possibilité de certaines interprétations, et aide à fixer ce choix parmi celles qui restent; sans cela, ou quelque chose semblable à cela: nulle métaphysique qui ne soit pas plus ou moins creuse, et plus ou moins en dehors de la réalité (BL, 162).

In a postscript, Hügel emphasized the distinction between (1) the glorious Christ as he is in eternity, in certain high points of his worldly career, and in the sacrament, and (2) his worldly career as such, with its intermediary character of real growth, real potentialities and obscurities, and real intellectual temptations. The fourth Gospel gives us the true Christ, the eternal Christ, but not so much his progressive growth, or the growth in the consciousness of his apostles. Hügel is amazed to find so many Christians reluctant to accept the Kenotic theory of Christ. Only with such a theory can historical criticism be reconciled with the life of devotion and spirituality.

Archbishop Mignot understood both the necessity of a renewal of ecclesiastical studies on the basis of a more critical biblical exegesis, and the wisdom of maintaining contact with tradition. He was opposed to draconian measures. He wrote to Hügel on March 22: "Quoi qu'on fasse, les problèmes demeurent et il faudra bien les résoudre. La question biblique ne saurait être tranchée par une décision de l'Index, pas plus que la décision du Saint-Office n'a empêché la terre de tourner" (See HDC, 476).

On March 28, Blondel informed Wehrlé that he has no direct news from either Hügel or Loisy, but that he read an interesting biblical chronicle of the latter in the last issue of his Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature religieuse. On March 31, Blondel wrote again to Wehrlé: "Ah, comme nos ennemis tiennent à ce que le Turinazisme soit le vrai, le seul catholicisme pour pouvoir dire: Voyez le catholique, c'est le despote ou l'esclave; il ne sera jamais qu'une punaise à écraser." He asks prayers for Bremond involved in a terrible crisis of persecution. No news yet from Hügel. If L'Evangile et L'Eglise is officially placed on the Index, he will write a word of consolation to the author (Both unpublished letters in AB, except four words in CCM, 113).

On April 2, Blondel wrote to Laberthonnière his impressions of Gombault's thesis, acclaimed at the Institut Catholique of Paris and in the Catholic press, in which he is accused of being a disciple of Kant and admirer of Luther:

> Je resterai l'homme qui vit de l'ombre d'une ombre. Et comment persuader à de telles gens que ni Kant n'est ce qu'ils en font, ni nous ne sommes Kantiens, pas plus au sens dénaturé qu'ils attribuent au Kantisme qu'au sens authentique de Kant lui-même. Ce qu'il y aurait peut-être lieu de relever, ce sont les confusions continuelles -- et les incohérences invraisemblables de ce malheureux abbé lauréat. Confusion fondamentale entre l'objectif représenté et l'objet réel, entre l'idée (subjectiviste) et l'état subjectif et vital, entre la connaissance explicite que le théologien a du surnaturel abstraitement et la présence effective et implicite du supernatural _in concreto_, entre le travail du scholastique qui subordonne tout à l'exactitude démontrée des définitions littérales, et l'effort de l'apologète qui cherche à orienter, à éclairer le mouvement complexe de toutes les puissances de l'âme pour faire accepter et reconnaître simultanément la grâce _intus_ et la révélation _foris_ en manifestant leur convergence et leur unité d'action (LAB, 133).

In his articles, Gombault tried to create a disagreement between Laberthonnière and Blondel. The latter continues: "M. Gombault confond encore et partout la notion explicite du surnaturel théologiquement défini (comme si c'était elle seule qui était intrinsèquement salutaire, et comme si la Rédemption avait été _pour être connue_ et non _pour être_) avec la réalité surnaturelle qui travaille en nous, fût-elle ignorée, méconnue ou exclue" (_LAB_, 133). Once again, Blondel considers that the _reality_ of universal redemption is much more important than the _explicit knowledge_ of revelation. Since knowledge is only one aspect of the totality of life, the supernatural action of God in man, even if ignored, misunderstood, or excluded, is much more important than the limited knowledge of it that man can acquire.

In the only section of this same letter that was published, Blondel explains to Laberthonnière his disagreement with Hügel and Loisy:

> M. de Hügel aboutit, par l'histoire et par sa _dévotion_, à un Christ dont la conscience est obnubilée, sujette à nos tâtonnements et à nos incertitudes, dupe de l'illusion de la Parousie imminenti, n'ayant point la certitude humaine de sa divinité. M. Loisy, je crois a le même sentiment, mais dans notre longue correspondance il a toujours esquivé les déclarations formelles de M. de Hügel. Et voici alors la position que j'ai prise contre eux: pour moi j'ai _foi_ au Dieu-Homme, et je ne vois philosophiquement aucune raison décisive pour ne pouvoir conserver sa véritable humanité qu'en amortissant sa divinité; (loin de là, et j'ai essayé de montrer en quel sens j'entends le "Fils de l'Homme"). Si donc c'était la _méthode_ de M. Loisy qui le conduisait scientifiquement à cette diminution du Sauveur,

> je déclarerais cette science et cette méthode irrécevables, par vice secret qu'il resterait à découvrir. Mais il semble que ce soit là simplement une opinion, une foi dont la méthode n'est pas responsable. Toutefois la méthode est incomplète, parce qu'elle tolère et favorise une telle erreur: pourquoi? C'est ici que nous touchons au point délicat. En thèse, M. Loisy déclare bien que l'histoire n'est pas tout, et qu'il faut réserver la part de la théologie, l'autorité de l'Eglise, l'interprétation dogmatique; mais en fait cette autorité, pour lui, reste en l'air, le dogmatisme est une ratiocination artificielle, la théologie n'est en somme qu'un pieux roman. Et quand il parle des développements légitimes et authentiques de l'Evangile dans l'Eglise, il s'est ôté d'autre part tout moyen, tout droit, tout critérium, pour fixer cette légitimité, pour reconnaître cette authenticité. Si bien qu'à mes objections il a fini par répondre: si vous avez d'autres moyens que l'analyse historique pour déterminer le sens originel du christianisme, vous êtes plus riche que moi, mais j'hésiterais fort à m'en servir, et je vous laisse à votre psychologie individuelle. Ce qui revient à dire qu'il n'a aucune idée du travail collectif et de l'expérimentation séculaire qui a trituré, digéré, pratiqué l'Evangile dans l'action continue de la chrétienté vivante; et pourtant, n'est-ce pas, c'est bien là, dans l'Ecclesia discens qu'est l'inspiration de l'Ecclesia docens, c'est dans cette épreuve à la fois catholique et personnelle que la Révélation se confirme, s'éclaire; et c'est par cette voie que les suggestions de l'Esprit-Saint développent et vivifient l'Eglise (BL, 163-164).

In sum, Blondel cannot accept the Kenotic theory of Hügel. Because of his faith in the God-Man, he cannot understand philosophically the integrity of Christ's divinity and humanity except by a divine assumption of the whole of humanity with no diminution of his divinity. He makes a distinction between Loisy's method and Loisy's faith. If Loisy's method tolerates a Kenotic theory, it must be false. Loisy never rejected the necessity of referring to the whole tradition to explain the Christian development, but he preferred to make abstraction of it in the historical determination of scriptural teaching. His methodological abstraction was his defense against the scholastic theologians who were imposing ready-made answers to biblical exegesis. Blondel has forgotten Loisy's distinctions and clarifications and now accuses him of saying one thing and doing another, of accepting tradition in theory and rejecting it in practice. He accuses Loisy of ignoring the collective and centuries-old experimentation which digested and practiced the Gospel. According to Blondel the inspiration of the Ecclesia docens, the Magisterium, is in the Ecclesia discens, in the whole Church, clergy and laity, guided and vivified by the Holy Spirit.[1]

On the same day, April 2, Hügel wrote a long response to Blondel's letter of February 19 (see CCM, 139-147). Six weeks of reflection have not cleared up all their disagreements. Blondel's remarks helped him to correct an expression, but not his thought. Hügel makes a retractation, adds an explanation, and refutes two exaggerations of Blondel.

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[1] In his proclamation of the Assumption of Mary in 1950, Pius XII spoke of the "sensus fidelium" as the main reason for the new dogma. It would be interesting to compare this "sensus fidelium" with what Blondel wrote about the Ecclesia discens.

First, Blondel wrote that Hügel equates the representation and the objective image of reality with a portion of reality itself. Hügel regrets this misunderstanding of his expression and feels confident that his context should explain what he meant.

Secondly, Hügel marvels at Blondel's lack of distinction between the terrestrial and the glorious states of Christ. Evidently, it is the same Christ, but in different conditions. To refuse such a distinction would result in the evaporation of Christ's humanity. Even though it has been consecrated by centuries of tradition, such confusion is a great peril to Christianity. The glorious Christ is the divine Subject responsible for our redemption; but everyone tries to picture Christ for himself, to obtain an Object which he derives from the same sources. A better knowledge of Scripture can provide a more adequate image of Christ-Object. Hügel requires a real difference, not only between Christ's humanity and the humanity of other men, but also between the terrestrial and the glorified life of Jesus. The mystical experiences of St. Bernard and St. Theresa, quoted by Blondel, are certainly not "un pieux roman" if they refer to the glorified Christ.

Thirdly, concerning the similarities and differences between Christ himself and his image derived from the Gospels, Hügel wants to avoid three exaggerations of Blondel: (1) the image of Christ drawn from the Synoptics, the result of a long tradition reporting the controlled experiences of innumerable witnesses at various times and places cannot be compared with a simple portrait drawn at a unique moment of the life of either an observer or a person observed; (2) at the risk of falling into either absolute skepticism or endless allegorizations, the Synoptic image should not be dismantled in a series of isolated problems which please only a non-historical theology; (3) any skeptical attitude towards the Synoptics, as Blondel is inclined to have, would equally undermine the value of the fourth Gospel which Blondel prefers.

Fourthly, concerning Blondel's "prolegomena," Hügel understands the necessity not only of _historico_-_critical_ prolegomena, but also of _philosophico_-_theistic_ prolegomena, even of the use of the whole tradition for the interpretation of Church history and Christian development. But he does not understand the need of specifically _catholico_-_ecclesiastical_ prolegomena for the historico-critical interpretation of Scripture. Such catholico-ecclesiastical prolegomena would involve a double vicious circle. (1) The New Testament is not only the product of the Church and the subject of its interpretation; it is also a human and historical testimony. If the Church relies on the historical character of Scripture, in that respect Scripture should be interpreted as logically anterior and independent of the Church's use of it. (2) Hügel doubts whether Christianity is such an hapax legomenon that it needs sacred prolegomena for the interpretation of its history, beyond the historico-critical and the philosophico-theistic prolegomena. Otherwise, Scripture would remain a closed book to men of good will, reserved exclusively to believers. Undoubtedly, the danger of naturalism should be avoided; but Hügel knows of no man who is simply "natural," deprived of all grace from God. Even though a certain friction exists between science and faith, this tension should remind the Christian scholar of his "created" condition and that he will never achieve a perfect comprehension of life.

Finally, Hügel proposes to Blondel that they both return quietly to the preparation of their respective books. As long as they seek God and the reign of Christ, they should draw some benefit from their correspondance.

On April 7, Blondel thanks Hügel for his admonitions and promises to meditate on them before tackling the exegetical problems in his future book. He still regards Hügel's thesis on christology as a substitution for the popular belief and theological virtues. Concerning his supposed confusion between the suffering Christ and the glorious Christ, Blondel believes that such a distinction is inconsistent for several reasons. (1) Such a distinction gives to time an absolute value which leads to the dissolution of the concrete unity of the divine person of Christ. (2) If the terrestrial Christ is other than the glorious Christ, how will faith go from the one to the other? It cannot be in virtue of the resurrection which, according to Loisy, is not an historically observable reality. It cannot be in virtue of the authority of the Church, which Hügel would reject when it affirms the divine consciousness of the Christ-Man. (3) Blondel opposes his "piety" which needs a Christ who has known and loved him even before his glorious condition. (4) Blondel claims that his analysis of sin, creation, and redemption leads him to deepen, not to effect a metamorphosis of tradional beliefs. (5) He is not convinced that even the Synoptics can support a Kenotic theory. Finally, Blondel feels that Hügel misunderstood his "prolegomena" and that he made an equivocal use of the Christ-Object.

The following day, on April 8, Blondel sent to Wehrlé the last letter of Hügel and his own response to it. Of Hügel he writes: "Visiblement, mes thèses l'importunent, comme les siennes m'attristent, quelque effort que je fasse pour les examiner avec une paisible sérénité" (CCM, 149). Wehrlé made earlier the same distinction as Hügel between the mortal condition and the glorious state of Christ, until he met Blondel's objections. The latter now observes:

> Je pense en effet qu'il y a là un problème à résoudre, touchant le modus de la vie terrestre du Christ passible;

> mais de là à la négation de la conscience qu'a eue le Sauveur de sa Divinité et de l'Humanité, il y a un abîme, et un abîme qui me paraît devenir infranchissable pour quiconque prétendra ne trouver dans l'histoire qu'un homme et espérera installer quand même dans le ciel un Dieu; car le Dieu-Homme me paraît une chimère s'il n'y a pas eu l'Homme-Dieu" (CCM, 150).

Here as elsewhere, Blondel attributes to Christ not a single human nature, but the assumption of the humanity of all men: in Christ, there would be his Divinity and the Humanity. Evidently, his christology is even less traditional than that of Hügel.[1] According to Blondel, Hügel's search for the autonomy of history could degenerate into an autocracy; his historical system would be based on sentimentalism and subjectivism; it is not the so-called impartiality of the exegete but a fiction.

On the same day, April 8, Blondel wrote to Laberthonnière: "M. de Hügel vient de m'écrire une grande lettre, où, par toutes sortes de raisons exégétiques, historiques et philosophiques, ascétiques et mystiques (ou dévotionnelles, comme il dit), il m'exhorte à abandonner la thèse 'périlleuse' d'un Christ-terrestre qui aurait eu la conscience de sa Divinité et une connaissance surhumaine de son Humanité et de l'Humanité" (BL, 165). Blondel is afraid that Hügel's position would dis-solve the unique divine personality of Christ and undermine the ontological role of the Mediator as well as the soteriological role of the Redeemer:

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[1] At least if one considers Thomas Aquinas as a representative of a long tradition. See his Summa Theologiae, III, qu. 4, art. 5., where Aquinas rejects the assumption by Christ of a universal humanity and attributes to him only an individual humanity.

> Ah, vraiment, que pensez-vous de cette thèse de M. Loisy et de M. de Hügel, est-ce que, en y répugnant, je reste dupe de mauvaises habitudes d'esprit, d'une routine scolastique et d'une théologie qui prend ses arrangements logiques et ses satisfactions artificielles pour la réalité toujours déconcertante, toujours scandaleuse à notre amour de la littéralité et de la clarté (BL, 165-166).

On April 13, Laberthonnière asked to read Hügel's letter. He was aware that both Hügel and Blondel are greatly troubled by their discussion. Laberthonnière reflected on Blondel's objection to Loisy's book. If Christ was not perfectly conscious of being God until his resurrection, it would mean that He was divinized as all men are divinized, it would mean that He was not God from the very beginning. What is the meaning of Jesus'"growth in wisdom"? Laberthonnière is not satisfied with a theology that skims over this problem:

> Mais, dans la thèse du baron de Hügel et de M. Loisy, il y a un peu, me semble-t-il, de la thèse de Renan, à savoir que c'est la foi des fidèles qui a divinisé le Christ. Ils répondraient assurément l'un et l'autre que la foi des fidèles a le Christ pour principe, et par là ils n'ont plus rien de commun avec Renan. Mais comment un Christ, qui n'aurait pas en lui-même conscience de sa Divinité, aurait-il pu faire que les autres en aient conscience? (BL, 166).

After reading Hügel's letter of April 2, and Blondel's response of April 7, Wehrlé wrote to Blondel on April 17. He thanks Blondel for having drawn him out of the dangerous trap of distinguishing between the temporal and the eternal conditions of Christ. He deplores the absence of genuine Christian simplicity and living orthodoxy in the camp of the scholars as well as the lack of scientific understanding in the camp of literal believers. He deplores also the disastrous influence exercised by Loisy and Hügel (see BV, 141).

On April 18, Blondel invited Laberthonnière to come to Quincy, his summer residence, to read there his dossier on Hügel and Loisy. Blondel would like to avoid the "concordisme" which poisoned exegesis: "Je veux dire qu'il vaut mieux parler le langage des apparences, en sachant que c'est le langage des apparences, sans s'efforcer de mettre une 'philosophie nouvelle' en harmonie stable avec les dogmes" (LAB, 133). This was exactly Hügel's and Loisy's intentions which Blondel never understood. Blondel called "philosophie nouvelle" anything which fell short of his theses regarding Christ's consciousness. On the other hand, both Hügel and Loisy were limiting themselves to the problems of textual criticism until they could find a new philosophical system, other than the scholastic system, which would respect the methodology of historical science.

Blondel's friend, l'abbé Mallet, asked Gombault where he found Blondel's admiration for Luther. Gombault answered: "Croyez-moi, le Protestantisme est là-dessus, dans cette haine furibonde de la Scolastique. Et le seul reproche que m'ait

adressé l'Institut Catholique, par la plume du P. Bulliot, c'est de n'avoir pas assez insisté là-dessus" (LAB, 133). Bulliot, the director of the Jesuit periodical Les Etudes, had been responsible for the condemnation of Loisy's book by Cardinal Richard, and was now pursuing the condemnation of Blondel.

On April 19, Blondel discussed again with Wehrlé the relations between redemption and revelation:

> La Rédemption, ontologiquement valable pour tous, est encore universellement proposée, mais par des stimulations secrètes et sous des traits qui peuvent être et qui ont été souvent anonymes ou pseudonymes. C'est la Révélation historique qui seule fait distinctement connaître le contenu et les modes opératoires de la Rédemption: cette connaissance expresse est un second don qui permet de discerner nommément et d'employer infiniment mieux le premier don; et il ne faut pas attribuer à celui-ci ce qui n'est vrai que de celui-là, ni inversement. Or, c'est à la scolastique qu'on doit le premier grand effort méthodique et scientifique que la raison ait tenté pour expliquer philosophiquement la Rédemption et la Déification de l'homme, grâce aux lumières de la Révélation. Et c'est là une question qui ne sera plus jamais fermée pour la spéculation philosophique, quoiqu'elle ait été toujours ouverte pour la vie morale et religieuse si rudimentaire soit-elle de l'humanité (CCM, 265, except one line which was skipped).

On April 24, Blondel confided again to Laberthonnière his impression on Gombault's thesis: "Toujours cette thèse que le souci de la vérité doit être impitoyable et homicide s'il le faut et que la charité est une source d'illusions désastreuses." Blondel reports another passage of Gombault's answer to Mallet:

> Personne n'a plus cité Blondel que moi, et je le mets au défi de prouver que j'ai mal expliqué les textes fondamentaux de son système. L'Action est le plus beau fruit du Kantisme et du libre examen. Tous ces gens-là Luther, Kant, Blondel ont horreur des principes mêmes de la philosophie scolastique sans lesquels est minée la théologie fondamentale. La théologie protestante sera seule à tirer profit de tout cela! (LAB, 133).

Blondel proposes to ignore such stupidity: a blind man could never notice the cock on the steeple of Notre Dame: "Tenons-nous donc au-dessus de ces misères et avancons-nous dans cette vie éternelle où vous me conviez comme au lieu géométrique de la vérité et de la charité" (LAB, 133).

Mourret and Wehrlé pressed Blondel in letters after letters to refute Loisy. Very few sections of these letters were mentioned in Documents sur l'histoire du modernisme. On April 30, Bricout invited Blondel to write an article on L'Evangile et L'Eglise in his periodical, La Revue du clergé français. Blondel declined this invitation (CCM, 159).

On May 14, Blondel wrote to Laberthonnière: "Il serait très utile de dire que nous ne sommes ni plus ni moins Kantiens, que Cartésiens, ou que Thomistes. Car nous cherchons à profiter de l'effort intégral de l'humanité pensante" (LAB, 133). On May 17, he congratulated Laberthonnière for his refutation of Gombault: "Pour le fond des choses, il me semble impossible de mieux révéler l'instabilité de la pensée oscillante du lauréat de Paris; et dire qu'à l'Institut Catholique on a sanctionné deux erreurs, parce qu'elles ressemblent, dans leur hybride mélange, à une vérité!" (LAB, 133). On May 23, Blondel wrote to Laberthonnière again his impressions on the exegetical work of Lagrange:

> J'ai sur le P. Lagrange la même impression que vous: chez lui la pensée, en tant que pensée, est insignifiante, inexistante. Et j'oserai ajouter que le problème de l'accord entre la probité scientifique et la fidélité du chrétien n'y est pas résolu ou n'y est résolu que par des expédients. Et quel style! Mais il n'en reste pas moins que cà et là il y a, par la force des faits, certaines déclarations qui, matériellement, sont un gain immense. Et si les "expédients" d'improbité sont la faute qui a obtenu l'imprimatur, disons donc: Felix culpa (LAB, 133).

Blondel encourages then Laberthonnière to dissipate the fable of their so-called Kantism. Even serious authors have a false notion of Kant's philosophy: "A force de les avertir que ce n'est pas cela, à force de leur répéter que nous ne sommes pas plus Kantiens qu'un astronome contemporain n'est Copernicien, on finira tout de même par abandonner le couplet" (LAB, 133). In other words, just as the contemporary astronomer takes Copernicus seriously, so Blondel and Laberthonnière took Kant seriously; which does not mean that they are slavish disciples of Kant. Gombault made several confusions in his interpretation of Blondel's Letter on Apologetics, most of them due to the naive realism of the scholastics who identify ideas with reality. During the last few months, Blondel has been trying to unravel the endless monstrosities of the origins and consequences of scholasticism (LAB, 133).

On June 16, Blondel answered to another invitation from Bricout: "Quant à produire 'un petit livre' de vulgarisation apologétique, je n'ai pas encore l'âge de l'abbé Loisy, et ce n'est pas une oeuvre de début; il y faudra d'autres préparations et une autre atmosphère que celle d'aujourd'hui" (Unpublished letter in AB). Blondel's manuscript on "L'Esprit chrétien," would have been a book as revolutionary as Loisy's L'Evangile et L'Eglise. If Blondel never published it in its original form, it was for fear of an immediate condemnation. He realized that the predominant Catholic mentality was not favorable for such critical views on so-called traditional beliefs.

On June 18, Blondel praised Laberthonnière for his publication of Essais de philosophie religieuse:

> Si j'oublie ce que vous dîtes de moi, je puis dire que c'est là un maître livre.... Vraiment il y a là mieux qu'une doctrine, il y a une attitude, une vie, une réalité intense et féconde.... Ce que vous paraissez m'emprunter est tout vôtre, plus vôtre que mien, et on peut répéter avec vous qu'il n'y a ni disciple ni Maître, si ce n'est le Maître dont nous devons tendre à être également les disciples (LAB, 133).

For many years, Blondel and Laberthonnière were close friends and collaborated closely together, sharing very much the same ideas, even though expressed differently. Blondel appreciated Laberthonnière's sound criticism of Lagrange, Batiffol, and Denis in his Essais. He hoped that men like Gayraud, Gombault, and Bulliot would not resume their heresy hunt.

In this chapter, we have considered Blondel's painful correspondence with Loisy and Hügel. Pursued by an avalanche of inquisitors, Loisy is suspect for the orthodoxy of his writings and his personal faith. Hügel, who shares Loisy's views on biblical studies, tries desperately to pacify those who are unfamiliar with the problems of critical exegesis. Blondel is also pursued as a disciple of Kant and admirer of Luther. His two spiritual advisors, Wehrlé and Mourret, share his ignorance of historical methodology and critical exegesis. Their main concern is to spare Blondel from a condemnation similar to that of Loisy. They encourage Blondel to express himself in his future writings in more Catholic and more traditional ways. Wehrlé engages Blondel in a correspondence with Loisy, hoping that a philosopher may refute the implicit christology of the exegete. Blondel searches desperately for the flaw in Loisy's methodology and can find it only in a deficiency of his faith. In order to maintain his stature as a philosopher, Blondel speaks of some "prolegomena to all future exegesis." Hügel understands these to be some "catholico-ecclesiastical" prolegomena and rejects them as unnecessary to the historico-critical study of Scripture. As a matter of fact, it is Blondel's faith which cannot be reconciled with the methodology of either Loisy or Hügel. Blondel is thus confronted with a dilemma. He knows of no other theology than the scholastic theology which is presented to him as the equivalent of orthodoxy. In his criticism of scholasticism, he is now obliged to make distinctions between the scholastic formulations which he is ready to reject and the content of the doctrine which the scholastic theologians seek to explain. On the other hand, he realizes that Loisy and Hügel claim for biblical exegesis the same autonomy as he claims for his own philosophy of L'Action. He understands their work as parallel and complementary to his own. His problem consists then in searching for an intermediary science, a Christian science, Catholic and traditional, which would reconcile theology with modern critical methods. This was the occasion of his treatise History and Dogma which we shall examine in the next three chapters.

CHAPTER V

PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION OF HISTORY AND DOGMA, PART ONE

Pope Leo XIII died on July 20, 1903, at the age of 93, after a reign of twenty-five years. He was mourned by the majority of Roman Catholic scholars (see BV, 93-94). In particular, Blondel and Loisy were always grateful for the personal interventions of Leo XIII who saved them from a condemnation by the Index, the former in 1897 (see BV, 95), the latter in 1903, a month before the Pope's death (AL, 116).

In a letter to Laberthonnière on July 16, 1903, Blondel could not suggest the name of any cardinal of equal intellectual standing with the late Pope: "Quant à soupçonner que l'un des cardinaux fût en état d'orienter selon nos vues la formation intellectuelle et la rénovation philosophique, je ne saurais hasarder le moindre nom" (LAB, 133). He was sure that the intellectual life of the Catholics would suffer a decline, as he told Wehrlé on July 28: "Quel que soit l'élu, et même si les succès extérieurs de la Révélation en sont douloureusement retardés, nous savons que l'oeuvre de la Rédemption s'accomplit" (BV, 94). On the same day, Mourret told Blondel of his pessimism for the coming intellectual crisis within the Church, and especially, for the state of religion in France: "Ce qui s'effondre, ce n'est pas l'Eglise de France, j'en suis persuadé; elle a encore des éléments de vie trop énergiques pour être en péril; mais c'est une forme, une constitution ecclésiastique, une pensée religieuse" (BV, 84).

Pius X was elected Pope on August 4, 1903. The next day, Blondel told Wehrlé his impression of the new Pope whom he had known since 1884:

> Ma première impression, c'est que la "réaction" triomphe, mais sous la forme la plus bénigne. En ce monde tout va par rythmes. Le choix même du nom est une indication. Le Saint Esprit qui ne peut user que des hommes vivants ne pouvait sans miracle nous donner un initiateur intellectuel. Puisse seulement le zèle de la piété ne pas amener "l'incendie" qui aboutirait, par l'*ignis ardens*, à la *religio depopulata*. Enfin, de toutes façons, il y a, il y aura beaucoup à agir et plus encore à souffrir (BV, 94).

On August 10, Blondel wrote to Wehrlé that in this period of crisis, in which the atmosphere is not favorable for intellectual initiatives, it is good that the new Pope is inclined towards works of piety and mercy (BV, 94).

On August 18, Wehrlé thanked Laberthonnière for a gift copy of *Essais de philosophie religieuse* and encouraged the latter in his support of Blondel: "Il faut quelqu'un pour faire l'oeuvre que vous faites et vous avez reçu mission pour l'accomplir. Il fallait à Blondel un concours *ecclésiastique* convergent jusqu'à coïncidence complète. Votre destination est symétrique de là même et je ne puis qu'admirer dans cette harmonie l'oeuvre amoureuse de la Providence" (LAB, 3). From one priest to another, this sounds rather like an expression of clerical paternalism towards a lay philosopher.

On October 5, 1903, Loisy published a second edition, revised and augmented of L'Evangile et L'Eglise, along with three new books: Autour d'un petit livre, Le Quatrième Evangile, and Le Discours sur la Montagne (AL, 116). Five days later, archbishop Mignot, who feared the condemnation of Loisy, made a few observations to his friend:

> J'espère qu'il n'en sera rien et que l'on comprendra que dans l'état actuel des esprits il n'y a plus d'apologétique sérieuse que celle qui s'appuie sur le développement du dogme. Que vous donniez trop de place à la raison développante et trop peu à l'action révélante de Dieu, c'est ce que vos adversaires qui ne sont pas tous des lecteurs de bonne foi, comme l'archevêque à qui vous faites l'honneur d'adresser la quatrième lettre, ne manqueront pas de dire. C'est l'objection qui a déjà été faite à Toulouse et qu'on ne manquera pas de faire encore (LOI, 27).

In the fourth letter just mentioned, addressed to Mignot in Autour d'un petit livre, Loisy recalled the preface of L'Evangile et L'Eglise in which he clearly stated that he was writing history only, and not an apology for traditional dogma. He did not include any theological christology, but only an historical study of the event of Christ. The historian's phenomenal description is not incompatible with the profound truth of faith. As far as the divinity of Jesus Christ is concerned, Loisy wrote: "La divinité du Christ est un dogme qui a grandi dans la conscience chrétienne, mais qui n'avait jamais été expressément formulé dans l'Evangile; il existait seulement en germe dans la notion du Messie fils de Dieu" (APL, 117). The faith in Christ's divinity, not formally expressed before Jesus' death, grew later on as the Christians, inspired by the Holy Spirit, reflected on his life and mission. Paul, the author of the fourth Gospel, and that of the epistle to the Hebrews are witnesses of this growth. If christology had been explicit from the very beginning, wrote Loisy, there would not have been so many heresies: "Il ne faut donc pas trop s'étonner que la consubstantialité du Père et du Fils, définie par le concile de Nicée, ne se discerne pas dans la prédication évangélique du royaume des cieux" (APL, 119).

On October 22, Wehrlé expressed to Blondel his sadness after reading Autour d'un petit livre: "Ce livre peut faire et fera un mal incalculable avec le mélange de revendications justifiées et de conclusions fausses qu'il renferme, avec la recommandation de la science et du caractère de l'auteur et les procédés spécieux d'une méthode vicieuse mise en oeuvre par un talent supérieur" (CCM, 159). Two days later: "En causant hier avec des jeunes gens bien disposés et intelligents, j'ai été consterné de voir les ravages opérés par la méthode historique préconisée par M. Loisy. Il est temps de dénoncer le vice de cette science plus tyrannique que la géométrie avec

un postulat certainement moins solide que celui d'Euclide" (CCM, 159-160). For a large number of clerical students the contrast between a conservative theology and a dogmatic approach to Scripture on the one hand, in contrast to new discoveries due to the application of modern critical and historical methods to Scripture and traditional dogma on the other hand was disturbing. It was to be expected that some imprudent neophyte would reject some fundamental doctrinal elements in the process of revision and reformulation.

From October until the end of December, both Wehrlé and Mourret swamped Blondel with a deluge of letters encouraging him to write against Loisy (see CCM, 169). On October 27, Mourret wrote: "Votre article calme et ferme, sans personnalités, viendrait à son heure dans un des prochains numéros de La Quinzaine (CCM, 160).

Blondel wrote to Wehrlé on November 7: "Je persiste dans le projet que vous avez encouragé, et je voudrais opérer le triage qui justifierait sévérités et enthousiasmes, en empêchant qu'une condamnation globale risque d'avoir des effets doublement fâcheux" (BV, 114). Blondel wished to make a discrimination between the elements he approved and those he disapproved in the work of Loisy. After Blondel's visit in Paris, Mourret wrote him on November 11 and insisted that he write an article in which he would clearly separate the philosophy of L'Action from the historical exegesis of L'Evangile et L'Eglise:

> Vous êtes presque mis en cause par certaines phrases de M. Loisy. J'ai constaté, ce matin même, auprès d'un prêtre intelligent, qu'on est très porté à interpréter la doctrine de L'Action dans le sens des doctrines de L'Evangile et L'Eglise. Et puis l'autorité que vous avez auprès de beaucoup de jeunes gens les mettra en garde contre le danger. Peu importe la forme de votre intervention. Article signé à La Quinzaine; interview de M. Mallet dans la Revue du clergé français; tout sera bon. Les deux formes ne s'excluent pas d'ailleurs (CCM, 160).

As a measure of precaution to explain his intervention in a theological debate, Blondel could say that he was invited by Mourret, the director of the Sulpician seminary in Paris, to express his opinions on the crisis.

On November 14, Wehrlé wrote that Loisy was undermining the traditional christology. For the first time, he tells Blondel that he is offended by "le mensonge de cet appareil scientifique qui sert de couverture à la plus arbitraire, à la plus fantaisiste, à la plus anti-scientifique des doctrines" (CCM, 161). According to Wehrlé, Loisy is ready to examine all the hypotheses except one, "celle d'un symbolisme préparé par un Dieu intelligent et caché dans des faits authentiques pour être dégagé plus tard par un écrivain inspiré, saint Jean ou un autre, qui aurait pénétré plus avant dans l'intelligence du sens spirituel des événements et des personnages" (CCM, 161). Wehrlé believes that neutrality for a Christian historian is equivalent to apostasy: "On élimine des faits ce qu'on a d'abord éliminé de soi avec tant de soin, parce que jamais on ne retrouvera dans les faits que ce qui répond à un besoin, ou à une notion, ou à une expérience internes" (CCM, 162). So many young priests are fascinated by Loisy's writings that there is danger of a schismatic church and an "Affaire Dreyfus" within the clergy. Wehrlé calls on Blondel for help: "Venez-nous en aide, cher ami!" (CCM, 163).

On November 17, Laberthonnière wrote to Blondel:

> Nous nous réunissons tous les samedis à La Quinzaine. Il est convenu qu'on y rédigera une sorte de correspondance qui sera d'abord envoyée spécialement aux Semaines religieuses. La pensée c'est d'arriver à changer l'esprit de la presse dite catholique--que sortira-t-il de là? (MMd, 41)

Most of the diocesan weekly newspapers in France, according to Laberthonnière, need a transformation of their views from a narrow conservatism to an open acceptance of modernity. He deplores a recent article of Gayraud against "Loisysme," written with the approval of Cardinal Perraud; "Gayraudisme," he says, is no more orthodox. The following day, Blondel advised Laberthonnière not to refute immediately Gayraud, whose articles in L'Univers and La Revue du clergé français, he describes as filled with the ineptitudes and confusion of a naive realism. On the problem of "Loisysme," Blondel is struck by the dangers of conclusions which seem to be less provisional and methodological than doctrinal and minimizing (LAB, 133).

Laberthonnière answered on November 23: "Il parait que Loisy ne sera pas condamné. C'est ce que semble indiquer la mesure prise par le Cardinal Richard qui a écrit de Rome aux différents supérieurs des maisons de Paris pour leur faire retirer les ouvrages de Loisy des mains de leurs élèves. On en conclut qu'il n'a pas pu obtenir autre chose" (MMd, 41).

According to Grandmaison, Loisy was becoming more obstinate in intellectual debates because his opponents were advancing too many insufficiently verified facts and theories weakened by exaggerations (BV, 162). On November 21, archbishop Mignot announced to Loisy that he is going to Rome to prevent the exegete's condemnation. Two days later, he informed Hügel of the difficulties of his project: "Nous avons affaire à très forte partie. Les adversaires de Loisy sont d'autant plus redoutables qu'ils sont de meilleure foi et se croient les défenseurs de Dieu" (HDC, 477).

When Edgar Janssens spoke of the Kantian inspiration of Blondel's philosophy in the Revue néo-scolastique, Denis answered in the Annales de philosophie chrétienne: "M. Janssens sera peut-être curieux de savoir que lors de mon entrevue avec M. Blondel il fut longuement question de saint François de Sales, de Biran et de Newman; j'affirme qu'il ne fut pas dit un mot de Kant" (BV, 64). Since Kant meant for most Roman Catholics the Protestant heresy and rationalism, any indication of Kantian influence was sufficient to mar the orthodoxy of anyone accused of it.

On November 22, Mourret wrote to Blondel a long letter in which he discussed the question of Loisy's exegesis which was causing the greatest trouble among the French Catholics since "L'Affaire Dreyfus." Mourret worries over the fascination that Loisy exercises on several young priests. As Loisy insisted on the autonomy and the distinction of history from theology, Mourret attributes to Loisy a complete exclusion of theology from history. He claims that Loisy is obliged to admit a series of increasingly illogical hypotheses: God is unconscious of being God; the Founder of Christianity is inferior to all the prophets; the Redeemer saved the world by an unconscious and a-moral act; fifty years after the death of Christ, the most organized Religion made a sudden appearance, with its dogmas of Incarnation, Redemption, and the Church, without a clear indication that these were revealed by Christ; the greatest Faith arose at the moment of the failure of Christ's prophecies; the internal criticism of texts is based on an a priori exclusion of divine revelation; dogmatic formulations are meaningless; there are two contradictory classes of truths, those of history and those of faith. According to Mourret, all these false hypotheses derive from the false methodology of Loisy, who excluded a priori the only true hypothesis, "l'hypothèse d'une action surnaturelle divine, objective, opérée par le Christ historique." This hypothesis, continues Mourret, can explain all the facts observed by the most critical mind; it allows for an easy explanation for the growth of Christ's human science while he was conscious of his divinity; it explains how the God-Man adapted his speech to the time and place of his sermons; it explains how men understood progressively and gradually Christ's revelation; it explains the failure, not of the promises of Christ, but of the primitive and gross interpretation which was allowed by Christ himself as a means of purifying faith; it guides the internal criticism of texts; it allows for a true and homogenous development of dogmas, rather than a succession of heterogenous elements; finally, it allows for a single class of truths, "un seul ordre de vérités religieuses: celui de vérités historiques interprétés par la foi,--ou si l'on veut,--de vérités de foi fondées sur l'histoire." Mourret adds: "Cette hypothèse de la révélation surnaturelle ne devait pas seulement être acceptée a posteriori comme la seule explication de tous les faits; elle devait être examinée la première, a priori." Since it is impossible to write history without any psychology, it is also impossible to write religious history without a religious psychology. Mourret surely does not want a psychology a priori, but an empirical psychology, positive, based on facts of experience. The religious experience is at hand: "Nous l'avons dans la vie collective de l'Eglise, dont le concile du Vatican nous dit qu'elle est à elle seule un témoignage irréfragable de sa Divinité. Nous l'avons dans l'expérience de la vie individuelle." A flower can prove God; a sister of Charity proves the divinity of Jesus Christ. Mourret offers this argumentation to all the young priests who come to him, as director of the Sulpician seminary in Paris. He offers it now to Blondel, inviting him again to intervene with an article against Loisy. The only difficulty, warns Mourret, is for Blondel to abstain from mentioning any questionable elements of his own philosophy, which could easily compromise him with Loisy. Finally, Mourret exhorts Blondel: "Allons au secours des âmes droites, et laissons les pharisiens se scandaliser" (MMd, 51; CCM, 163 dates erroneously this letter November 11).

On November 23, Blondel answered Mourret:

> Je n'ai pas le projet de critiquer directement M. Loisy, mais je prends la méthode in abstracto, dans sa pureté artificielle, j'en montre les lacunes, les impossibilités, et j'insiste sur les dangers ou les ruines inévitables qu'elle entraîne, même pour des esprits de bonne foi et de bonnes intentions. Si j'indique en terminant les solutions que je crois salutaires et la méthode qui me semble nécessaire, c'est du moins sans les solidariser d'une façon compromettante avec la "philosophie de l'action et la méthode de l'immanence." (BV, 114).

Blondel does not want to criticize directly Loisy; he intends to show the philosophical lacunae and the dangers of an artificial abstraction that he can derive from the methodology of Loisy.

He will make an effort not to involve too clearly his own philosophy in his proposal of a more fruitful methodology. On November 24, he writes again to Mourret: "C'est en effet sur la question de méthode que porte mon principal effort, et c'est en terminant que je proteste contre les conclusions antidoctrinales et antiphilosophiques qu'on insinue au nom d'une science qui prétend se passer de la doctrine et de la philosophie" (BV, 114). Blondel's main objection against Loisy at this point is that of abstracting from doctrine and philosophy in writing history.

On November 26, informed by Wehrlé that Blondel has interrupted the composition of his article against Loisy, Mourret remains adamant in his recommendation: "La publication de votre pensée sur M. Loisy peut dissiper bien des préjugés et faire du bien." Of course, there need be several precautions: "Je crains qu'on n'exploite contre vous les égards que vous aurez pour le talent et le caractère de M. Loisy ou pour certaines de ses idées" (CCM, 170-171). In this period of the religious crisis, anyone who showed the least affection or inclination for the ideas of Loisy became immediately suspect. Mourret gives the examples of Bricout and Klein, who were accused by Maignen and Fontaine of sympathy towards Loisy. Mourret wants to spare Blondel such misfortune:

> Je serais d'avis que, rejetant nettement la méthode et les conclusions (conclusions apparentes) du petit

> livre, vous entriez le moins possible dans l'exposition de votre philosophie; on en ferait diversion; on vous attaquerait sur ce point. Vous voyez bien que l'abbé Gayraud n'a pas encore compris une explication qu'on lui a donnée vingt fois. Son dernier article est aussi inopportun que mal pensé. Bien entendu, je ne vois aucun inconvénient à ce que, comme le P. Prat et M. Gayraud lui-même, vous rendiez hommage au talent, à la science et au caractère de l'abbé Loisy (MMd, 51).

Mourret does not want to confuse Loisy with Marcel Hébert. The latter wrote on July 15, 1903, in La Revue de Belgique, an article entitled "La religion de la conscience humaine," in which he proposed to abandon the historical Christ in favor of the ideal Christ. Mourret observes: "Je suis loin d'affirmer et je ne me crois pas le droit de penser que le fond de la doctrine de M. Loisy aboutisse là. Mais n'y a-t-il pas lieu de craindre que plusieurs lecteurs de Loisy croient voir dans son petit livre les prémisses des conclusions de M. Hébert?" (MMd, 51; see CCM, 328).

On November 28, Mourret gave to Blondel all freedom to quote, copy, correct, or modify anything he had written to him on the methodological errors of Loisy. Apparently, Loisy is expecting an eventual censure by the Biblical Commission; but Mourret has heard from the chancery of Albi that the Congregation of the Index will precede the Biblical Commission and condemn Loisy before very long. Blondel should hasten therefore the publication of his article. Mourret offers to be his ecclesiastical censor (see CCM, 165 and 166).

At first, Blondel planned only one article on Loisy; by the middle of December, he divided his project in two articles, one on "extrinsicism," and one on "historicism"; finally, he published three articles, the third dealing with "tradition."

On December 3, Blondel explained to Mourret the slowness of his redaction. Laziness, dreariness, and weakness, he says, afflict him: "A mesure que je presse mon manuscrit, j'en sens mieux les insuffisances, je découvre des embarras inextricables encore pour moi, j'éprouve le besoin de relire de plus près le texte de M. Loisy pour ne pas risquer de fausses interprétations et pour éviter les fausses orientations" (*CCM*, 165). If the new theses seem dangerous, the old methods are no less deficient and perilous. If he succeeds to write a few pages of rough draft, he will send them over for Mourret's observations. Meanwhile, he plans to reread the two "petits livres" and the preface of *Le Quatrième Evangile* of Loisy. He prefers to delay the publication of his article for the sake of precision and justice. Finally, he begs Mourret to keep him informed of official decrees and pertinent articles on the subject.

Fortunately, some of the notes that Blondel jotted down during his reading of the two "petits livres" of Loisy have been kept in his archives. We shall reproduce here some

of his observations. First, on L'Evangile et L'Eglise:

> L'histoire de l'Eglise et de la papauté est comme un défi aux lois de l'histoire.--On n'a pas le droit de poser les faits d'un côté, les données théologiques de l'autre, c'est-à-dire, de partager des abstractions. L'historien doit remonter jusqu'à ces sources de la vie et de l'action où se trouve l'indivisible synthèse dont les faits d'une part et les formules de l'autre n'ont été qu'une double et fidèle traduction en langage différent. Ne pas laisser croire que les transformations dogmatiques sont dues ni à une simple dialectique , ni à la pression des circonstances extérieures--affaire d'âme et expérience morale--sortir de ce cercle: la Bible s'appuie sur l'Eglise et appuie l'Eglise - Loisy ne voit toujours que l'élément intellectuel, non l'élément vital et moral -- antinomie entre l'acosmisme et l'eschatologie, entre l'immortalité et le Royaume -- Peut-on affirmer que telle idée est aussi étrangère au Sauveur lui-même qu'elle l'a été aux Evangélistes: p.48 -- deux questions: ce que Jésus croyait être et le travail antérieur qui l'a amené à cette conclusion -- Les textes ne permettent pas d'analyser psychologiquement la notion du Fils de Dieu: p.57 -- on prétend que la méthode a fait totalement défaut au développement dogmatique et on fait appel à l'instinct de la foi: p. 138 -- les dogmes ne sont pas des aérolithes -- "le développement doctrinal étais fatal, donc légitime": p. 160 -- vrai ou faux, oui ou non, l'histoire est-elle compétente pour déclarer que le Christ a été limité et illusionné -- oui ou non, peut-on admettre que les choses se sont passées comme s'il l'avait été -- les critiques manquent à l'a.b.c. de l'esprit critique qui consiste à savoir critiquer les connaissances, non critiquer la science -- pas de docétisme -- juxtaposition du paraître et de l'être -- après avoir paru déclarer se contenter du paraître, on l'érige en être -- La seule manière de rester dans le phénomène, c'est de réserver la part de la réalité métaphysique -- Le magistère n'est pas inspiré, mais infaillible (accessoire) -- traiter le Christ comme réel c'est voir en lui non plus un objet, mais un sujet vivant -- insérer entre la théologie et l'histoire la psychologie du Christ -- s'il est légitime et scientifiquement nécessaire de ne point mettre la théologie à la base des travaux d'exégèse et de critique, il n'est pas légitime de tendre à constituer un système clos d'explications naturellement suffisantes et de faire définitivement et absolument rentrer le fait chrétien dans le déterminisme de l'histoire -- le doute méthodique et scienti-

> fique n'est tel que s'il est provisoire -- pas de subtilité qui tienne: le Christ s'est-il su Dieu, a-t-il su en Dieu...nous nous connaissons comme homme, même enfant -- la relativité des formules dogmatiques ne minimise pas le sens profond de l'amour -- Pour atteindre le Christ l'historien n'a que son enseignement et son portrait relaté; le croyant a autre chose -- La thèse: "L'Eglise n'est que l'Evangile continué est fausse ... car l'Eglise ne connait pas ce qu'elle a été à partir des seules données historiques -- cela ne peut se prouver par une simple considération de l'histoire positive en faisant abstraction de la divinité de l'Evangile et de l'Eglise -- Cette abstraction méthodique, légitime et même à certains égards nécessaire aussi longtemps qu'on s'en tient au matériel des faits, devient chimérique, illusoire, décevante, ruineuse dès qu'on s'y tient -- qu'il y ait une révision générale de l'enseignement théologique, l'adapter davantage à l'histoire, c'est vrai, mais non au sens de Loisy -- Je ne veux pas obliger Loisy à retrouver dans les textes ce qui n'y est pas -- l'histoire n'est qu'un témoin à interroger -- L'Eglise est le juge -- criterium: cela est bon qui est retenu pas la conscience chrétienne, reconnu par l'Eglise et utilisé pour le progrès chrétien -- la néo-scolastique ne laisse absolument aucune place pour la méthode et les faits historiques -- nécessité d'une autre métaphysique -- ne décrétant rien, mais sortant à la fois des faits en tant qu'historiques et des idées en tant que vécues -- ni cloison étanche, ni ultime gagné tout d'un coup ...

In these last observations, we recognize a few expressions jotted down from the recent letters of Loisy and Hügel. While reading Autour d'un petit livre, Blondel noted the following:

> Loisy ne voit qu'une face unilatérale et ne comprend pas comment à son tour l'histoire peut et doit être fondée sur la foi (l'interprétation historique porte non sur le quia, mais sur le quid est) -- erreur aussi de supposer que l'autorité de l'Eglise repose toute sur l'histoire (comme de croire que l'histoire repose toute sur l'Eglise) -- Loisy méconnait le postulat fondamental de la critique catholique: c'est que les inventions originales des siècles et des saints retrouvent quelque chose d'une réalité antécédente -- le conflit nait de ce que chacun veut porter des affirmations dernières --

> donc contradictoires--Elles ne le seraient pas si les unes étaient provisoires ou abstraites--la divinité de Jésus ne se pose pas devant le critique: p. 53; oui, mais qu'il ne la rende pas impossible--en quoi peut-il y avoir conflit s'il y a hétérogénéité des faits et des idées et on oublie les actes qui ont précédé, nourri, éclairé--équivalence de l'exposition initiale et de la définition ecclésiastique: p. 138--la forme intime de la conscience de Jésus échappe en grande partie à l'historien: p. 137--conjecture déshonorante pour l'homme de génie qui en serait l'objet: p. 139--on demande trop et trop peu à l'histoire--l'institution divine de l'Eglise est un objet de foi, non un fait historiquement démontrable: p. 161--c'est la foi au Christ qui a fondé l'Eglise...

In order to break out of the vicious circle,--the Bible rests on the Church and the Church rests on the Bible,--one extreme attitude is to rely exclusively on historical facts, the other, on dogmatic ideas. According to Blondel, Loisy gives too much credit to positive history and forgets that for a Catholic, historical interpretation can and must be based on faith, at least when it deals with the divinity of Christ and the divinity of the Church.

In response to Wehrlé's wholehearted encouragement (see BV, 115), Blondel wrote on December 4: "J'ai essayé de rédiger l'article Loisy; je n'aboutis qu'à des hésitations pénibles! Relisant les petits livres, je demeure oscillant entre les adhésions multiples que je donne à l'oeuvre et à la méthode, et les répugnances invincibles, les irritations que me causent mille pensées, mille manies" (CCM, 165). He finds it hard to distinguish between the methodology of Loisy which he approves at this point and the heterodox elements which he discovers in the work of the exegete (CCM, 165 and BV, 115). On the same day, Mourret informed Blondel about the papal reaction:

> Le Saint Père, après avoir lu le livre, a dit à M. Vigouroux: "Je le condamnerai." Cette parole n'a pas été rendue publique, que je sache. Je la connais confidentiellement. Voici maintenant des informations venant d'un ami de M. Loisy. M. Loisy pense, ou du moins pensait il y a quelques jours, que la condamnation ou désapprobation se fera par une encyclique, et non par un acte de l'Index, ou du Saint Office, ou de la Commission biblique. Vous savez que Mgr Mignot est à Rome et cherche à écarter une condamnation. Si on se rallie au projet de l'encyclique, on gagnera du temps (CCM, 166).

Mourret adds that the next issue of the Bulletin of Toulouse will contain a complete refutation of the work of Loisy. Lagrange will discuss the scriptural problem; Batiffol, the historical questions; and Portalié, the dogmatic problems. Mourret still encourages Blondel: "Peut-être faut-il laisser le débat se livrer d'abord sur le terrain plus ou moins traditionnel. Vous écrirez ensuite. Je comprends vos difficultés: difficultés de donner votre méthode historique, sans affirmer votre méthode générale; difficulté d'affirmer cette méthode pour l'opposer à la méthode soi-disant traditionnelle. D'où malentendus, attaques possibles" (MMd, 51). As a matter of fact, it was very difficult for Blondel to explain how he views historical science without involving his own philosophy; and to involve his own philosophy meant a risk of provoking new accusations on the part of his neoscolastic opponents; it was difficult to avoid the controversies which arose when Blondel, in his Letter on Apologetics, criticized the so-called traditional methods.

It will be useful at this point to summarize the three articles just mentioned by Mourret. In the winter issue of the Bulletin of Toulouse, three open letters were published, both in imitation of, and as a rebuttal to Loisy's Autour d'un petit livre. There was: (1) a letter from Lagrange of the Biblical Commission in Rome addressed to Mgr Pierre Batiffol, rector of the Institut Catholique of Toulouse, on "Jésus et la critique des évangiles"; (2) a letter from Batiffol to Dom Laurent Janssens, O.S.B., rector of San Anselmo College in Rome, on "Jésus et l'Eglise"; (3) a letter from E. Portalié, S. J. to the Reverend de Hummelauer, of the Biblical Commission, on "Le dogme et l'histoire."[1]

In the first article, Lagrange states that Loisy's principles are disastrous to faith and he is surprised that the latter has not yet been led to the liberal Protestant conclusions. As Loisy seems to build an irreducible opposition between history and dogma, Lagrange wants to examine the critical problems involved. Loisy's notion of religion is that of a "professorial religion," familiar to the professors of Protestant theology; his notion of the kingdom of God is that of Ritschl, a kind of interior morality, not entirely faithful to the Gospel facts. In an attempt to prove that Loisy's principles and conclusions are subject to criticism, Lagrange presents the various opinions of J. Weiss, B. Weiss, Wernle, Brandt, and Wrede. In opposition to Loisy, Lagrange believes that it is possible to make an historical demonstration of the divinity of Christ and the divine institutions of the Church:

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[1] BLE, (déc. 1903-jan.1904), 3-90; (fév.-mars 1904), 91-143.

> En présence de ces faits, rigoureusement établis par l'histoire, l'intelligence inclinée peut-être à croire par beaucoup d'autres considérations, conclut à la divinité de Jésus-Christ et à l'institution divine de l'Eglise; celle-ci déclare ensuite le caractère canonique des Ecritures. Dans ses grandes lignes, j'estime que l'argument est toujours solide, et c'est pour cela, je pense, que je me sépare nettement de M. Loisy pour lequel l'histoire est incapable de prouver ces faits (pp. 17-18).

This form of "apologetics through history alone," rejected by Loisy but adopted by Lagrange, is exactly what Blondel will criticize as historicism. In conclusion to his article, Lagrange grants that Loisy is right in saying that the Gospels are not pure history, but also expressions of faith, and that textual criticism is extremely useful.

In the second article, Batiffol claims that a simple observation of facts and texts can prove the divine institution of the Church. He recalls a text of Bossuet to that effect.

According to Batiffol:

> La dogmatique se superpose à l'histoire, qu'elle a mission d'expliquer à la pensée et à la foi; dans les pages qu'on va lire, l'histoire seule parlera. Mais on y verra suffisamment, j'espère, combien la dogmatique s'ajuste à l'histoire, loin qu'elle en soit une interprétation arbitraire et caduque (p. 29).

Batiffol's positive theology was an amalgation with positive history. Concerning the divine institution of the Church, Batiffol recognizes the innumerable problems raised by critical scholars. Jesus spoke of the kingdom, and not specifically of the Church. The identification of the Church with the kingdom, classical since saint Augustine, is far from being a literal interpretation of the Gospel. According to Batiffol, this identification is not the foundation for the divine institution of the Church: "Jésus a annoncé le royaume, aussi bien le royaume transcendant qui est dans les cieux, que le royaume immanent qui est dans les âmes chrétiennes, et l'Eglise est apparue qui est autre chose que le royaume soit transcendant, soit intérieur" (p. 48). The message of Christ was like an essentially organic thought, a unique flower budding on a shoot having deep roots, a flower whose fruit the Church is. According to Batiffol, the Church was intended by Jesus. He claims that for Loisy, the Church was a product of biological evolution, an organism created by a need.

In the third article, Portalié sees no difference between the liberal Protestantism of Auguste Sabatier and the religious philosophy of Loisy. He claims that Loisy created an opposition between dogma and history, because he was influenced by the German naturalism and has rejected the divine origin and immutability of dogma. In the next issue of BLE, Portalié opposed three fundamental truths to the doctrinal evolution of Loisy: (1) from Adam until the death of the last Apostle, dogma has progressed substantially by the successive promulgation of new truths of revelation; (2) since Revelation was closed with the death of the last Apostle, the Church proclaims a subjective development through a progressive knowledge of Revelation; (3) the evolution of dogma by alteration, as well as the appearance of substantially new dogmas, is in contradiction with the fundamental principle of the Church and with history itself. After he has made an historical and critical analysis of Loisy's works, Portalié discovered "une philosophie de la religion, empruntée aux théories de l'évolutionisme et de l'agnosticisme absolu" (p. 140). Portalié's argumentation against Loisy was marred by misquotations and erroneous attributions. In an article entitled "Autour des fondements de la foi," Bricout was able to point to over twenty faulty references and unfaithful quotations from Loisy in the articles of Portalié.[1]

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[1] RCF, 38 (1904), 244-272.

On December 4, 1903, two books of Charles Denis, editor of Annales de philosophie chrétienne, were placed on the Index; these were, Le Carême apologétique sur les dogmes fondamentaux and L'Eglise et l'Etat: Leçons de l'heure présente. This condemnation, the first of a long series under Pius X, was meant apparently to curb Denis' endorsement of modern critical philosophy and democratic ideas. Since the first book contained the sermons preached at the invitation of archbishop Mignot in the cathedral of Albi, Houtin believes that the latter was one of the targets of the condemnation.[1] This impression is supported by a letter of Denis to Laberthonnière:

> Il y a dans mon affaire un but compliqué, que les Jésuites ont peut-être atteint. Il s'agit de compromettre indirectement l'Archevêque d'Albi, qui d'ailleurs est parti à Rome immédiatement. Pourquoi mettre à l'Index le Carême apologétique qui n'est pas dans le commerce, puisqu'il est épuisé depuis un an? Cet opuscule a été prêché à Albi, il a paru dans la Semaine religieuse, et il a été imprimé à Albi. Les jésuites de Castres et ceux de l'Institut Catholique de Toulouse n'ont cessé d'avoir des démêlés avec Mgr Mignot et l'abbé Birot. Or j'attribue au P. Brücker la dénonciation portée par l'Archevêque de Paris à Rome. On n'ose pas frapper Loisy et on frappe les petits (LAB, 144).

Since Denis' condemnation reflects on the Annales, Laberthonnière is thinking of publishing elsewhere his latest article. Denis tries to dissuade him: "Je ne crois pas que ma mise à l'Index porte préjudice à votre attitude et à celle de M. Blondel. On a visé en moi le réformateur plutôt que le philosophe et l'apologiste." In a subsequent letter to Laberthonnière, Denis adds:

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[1] A. Houtin, La Question biblique au XXe siècle (Paris: Nourry, 1906), p. 110, note 2.

> Le Courrier du soir de Milan me consacre un article où il dit que je suis à l'Index pour deux motifs: (1) parce que j'ai dit dans le numéro de septembre dernier que l'Index était un reliquat de l'Inquisition et que Léon XIII en avait constaté les mauvais effets; (2) parce que j'ai reproché aux jésuites d'être en majeure partie la cause de nos ruines. Il n'est pas question de philosophie ni d'apologie. Ce journal qui paraît officieusement renseigné va jusqu'à dire que c'est une punition et une vengeance des jésuites (LAB, 144).

On December 6, Blondel wrote to Augustin Léger: "Que vous dire de nous, sinon que la 'Question' fait pendant à 'l'Affaire.' La question Loisy, ah! quel branle-bas dans le monde--assez ferme heureusement--des théologiens et des exégètes" (CCM, 164). Since Loisy's historical methodology was linked to Blondel's philosophy, the latter was advised to mark the proper distinctions. Basically, he writes to Léger, it is a problem of the relations between history and dogma, of the legitimate method to penetrate the consciousness of Jesus and to determine the notion and the manifestation of the divine. He was told that the Biblical Commission is responsible for the examination of Loisy's books; but it is quite possible that the Holy Office will anticipate with a condemnation.

On December 8, Blondel wrote to Laberthonnière: "Décidément je me suis mis à un article sur la relation du dogme et de l'histoire, et sur les limites de la science des faits dit historiques. Je sais de diverses sources confidentielles que l'abbé Loisy sera condamné. Il est bon sans doute de montrer d'avance ce qu'il y a de vital, d'essentiel, de fécond dans son oeuvre, en écartant la tare qui compromet tout" (LAB, 133). On the same day, Mourret sent to Blondel a copy of Batiffol's speech at the academic opening of the Institut Catholique of Toulouse. Apparently, Pius X will condemn Loisy in the same manner as Günther was condemned in the nineteenth century (see CCM, 166-167). To facilitate Blondel's task, Mourret suggests the following precaution: "Ne pourriez-vous pas, tout d'abord, sous la forme d'une entrevue avec M. Mallet, exprimer dans les grandes lignes, votre pensée, et parler à votre interlocuteur de votre projet d'article à la Quinzaine? Cet article, plus étudié, plus nuancé, paraîtrait ensuite; mais la position serait prise" (MMd, 51). In a postscript of the same letter, Mourret adds:

> Dans votre article vous pourrez bien faire une allusion discrète au discours de Mgr Batiffol,--lequel juge opportun de se faire un peu solennellement le chevalier des droits de la raison et de la scolastique et de la Tradition. Libre à lui de prendre cette position. Mais il vous est bien permis de dire que vous n'avez jamais eu l'intention d'attaquer ces causes vénérables (CCM, 303).

On December 10, Blondel thanked Mourret for his solicitude. He expects that some "charitable" persons will implicate him in the condemnation of Denis. If only this discharge could neutralize the electric tension of the atmosphere! He fears that Maignen and Batiffol will continue their assaults. He is pained by the hideous image of Roman Catholicism given by many of its official spokesmen. In particular, an article in L'Univers reporting the condemnation of Denis has shocked him:

> Ce pharisaïsme qui triomphe d'avoir eu raison contre un adversaire; qui, dans une impassibilité qui touche à la fatuité, interprète la condamnation au sens qui lui est favorable et qui n'est peut-être pas le vrai; qui ne songe pas qu'il y aurait lieu de ménager le prêtre ou du moins s'attrister de ses erreurs, et qui, tout de suite, juge, sans autorité ni compétence pour le faire, une philosophie tout entière (BV, 163).

The philosophy criticized by the article of L'Univers was the philosophy of L'Action. Another article in La Vérité française compromised Blondel with Loisy. Consequently, Blondel felt the need to take his distance from condemned men: "L'article de la Vérité me donne à réfléchir et me montre la nécessité de me 'désolidariser!' Mais quelle difficulté" (MMd, 51).

On December 11, Blondel asked Laberthonnière if he has visited recently l'abbé Denis. Should he write to the condemned priest? Blondel believes that Denis' condemnation was aimed at his hasty applications rather than at the philosophical principles which inspired him: "Mais il ne manquera pas de gens pour dire que nous sommes foudroyés par choc en retour. Déjà L'Univers triomphe et interprète: c'est la victoire du Gayraudisme tout entier. Et Mgr Batiffol, avez-vous lu dans son Bulletin du 20 novembre comment il vous Bautainise et nous jette à la fosse commune. Et l'abbé Maignen qui rend 'l'immanentisme' responsable du Loysisme!" (LAB, 133). Blondel and Laberthonnière are pursued by Gayraud, Batiffol, and Maignen who want to compromise them with Denis and Loisy and obtain their condemnation.

On December 12, Mourret again pressed Blondel: "Si vous êtes vraiment fatigué, pas assez libre et calme pour rédiger un article, eh bien, c'est Dieu qui aura voulu votre silence. Mais, en dehors de cet empêchement, votre intervention me parait devoir être utile" (CCM, 169).

On December 13, Blondel received two contradictory letters relative to his intervention in the crisis. Victor Giraud, from the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, wrote to Blondel: "N'intervenez pas!" (BV, 115). According to Poulat, there were two schools of thought at the Catholic University of Fribourg: (1) the "German party," reactionary and integrist, led by Gaspard Décurtins, and comprising the majority of the population, the professors of Fribourg, the Swiss clergy and hierarchy; (2) the "French party," liberal and modernist, with the dominicans Mandonnet and Rose, and the laymen, J. Brunhes, J. Zeiller, G. Michaud, P. M. Masson, and V. Giraud (HDC, 275, note 19). On the other hand, André

Pératé wrote to Blondel:

> Cher Maurice, tu voudrais amener l'auteur "d'un petit livre" à une définition plus précise du mot histoire! Je serais curieux de te voir définir l'histoire, isolée de la critique historique; si tu arrives à en faire une science exacte, à la façon de la chimie, je t'élèves des autels! Mais cela n'empêche pas la critique historique du malheureux Loisy d'être une étrange chose, et le pont qu'il jette entre sa foi qui admet tout et sa raison qui rejette tout, une architecture où j'aime mieux passer rapidement. Il y a certainement un sophisme au fond de tout cela, que je voudrais bien que tu nous développes, autrement que l'abbé Gayraud (j'ai lu dans L'Univers sa dernière réfutation du Loysisme qui était du pur enfantillage). On me dit qu'à Rome on aura une condamnation; le Cardinal n'a pu l'arracher mais on croit que les jésuites réussiront. Souhaitons que cette ruine-là ne s'ajoute point à toutes les ruines prochaines, et que l'on nous laisse, quelque temps encore, ce concordat de nos croyances, à défaut de l'autre (MMd, 71).

This letter of Pératé is a concise summary of the religious crisis in France: the debates which preceded the end of the concordat between the Vatican and France in 1904; the conflicts between the republican government and the hierarchy in France which led to the separation of Church and State in 1905; the conflicts between science and religion with Gayraud and the neoscholastics subjecting science to the scholastic system on the one hand, while Blondel, Loisy, and others wanted to foster the autonomy of science without any detriment to religion. Both Loisy and Blondel wished to develop an historical methodology as rigourous as that of any positive science; the difference between them is that Loisy was concentrating on the internal and external criticism of texts, while Blondel was beginning with some philosophical prolegomena. In the eyes of Pératé, Loisy kept a very narrow bridge between his critical science and his orthodox faith, while Blondel was trying to develop a scientific and positive history and neglecting historical criticism.

On December 13 again, Wehrlé wrote to Blondel: "J'aimerais que vous liquidiez la question de l'article Loisy; cela fait, remettez-vous à votre "Esprit chrétien" en vous tenant au-dessus des querelles du jour et du va-et-vient des impressions" (BV, 81). On the same day, Laberthonnière told Blondel that Denis was very sick. Batiffol, who seems ignorant of both Kant and Bautain, has linked Blondel and Laberthonnière to both of these philosophers, first to the rationalist, then to the fideist (CCM, 303). In a postscript, Laberthonnière adds: "M. Guibert me disait hier que pour Loisy il n'y aurait pas de condamnation. On s'attend à une encyclique parlant de la question à peu près comme l'encyclique Providentissimus. Et ce serait tout" (MMd, 41; see CCM, 166).

On Wednesday, December 16, pressed by Cardinal Richard and several French bishops, the Holy Office condemned five books of Loisy: La Religion d'Israël, L'Evangile et L'Eglise, Etudes Evangéliques, Autour d'un petit livre, Le Quatrième Evangile (see MOD, 190). Not published until December 24, the decree added the warning: "C'est pourquoi que personne de quelque rang et condition qu'il soit, n'ose donc, dans quelque lieu ou quelque langue que ce soit éditer à l'avenir, lire ou conserver les susdits ouvrages, condamnés et proscrits, sous les peines portées dans le Catalogue des livres défendus."[1]

Blondel told Laberthonnière on December 17: "Je me débats dans l'inextricable dédale de la question Loisy. Voyant ce que je vois, il me semble que non possum non loqui. Priez pour que je sois un petit instrument de paix et de lumière. Mais quelle difficulté de tirer au clair en quelques pages ces problèmes de méthode et de doctrine" (LAB, 133). On the same day, he informed Mourret of the progress of his article:

> Je n'en sors pas. Pour me couper la retraite, j'ai écrit à Fonsegrive (qui avec d'excellentes intentions vient encore dans sa note du 16 de me solidariser apparemment avec l'abbé Loisy) de me réserver de la place, si possible, dans la Quinzaine du 15 janvier. Je lui enverrais l'article pour le 1er, et si vous le permettez, je le ferais passer par votre censure, avant d'aller rue Vaneau. A vrai dire, je compte diviser en deux articles ce que j'ai à dire, même très sommairement. J'achèverais le second fragment entre le 1er et le 15 janvier, pour qu'il pût paraître le 1er février; mais l'important serait d'avoir amorcé ma critique avant l'éclat du Saint Office.

Blondel adds:

> Plus je serre les difficultés, plus je trouve d'embarras inextricables dans l'effort que je fais pour tirer au clair en quelques pages de quasi-vulgarisation les obscurités, les confusions, les erreurs de méthode et de

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[1] A. Houtin, La Question biblique au XXe siècle, pp. 112-113.

> doctrine qui, pullulent de part et d'autre, chez les Gauraudistes comme chez les Loisystes (*MMd*, 51; see *CCM*, 169; this letter is dated December 19 in *BV*, 115).

Note well in this letter: (1) Blondel is offering his article to Fonsegrive who has just linked him to Loisy; (2) he has decided to publish two articles instead of one; (3) he finds that it is as important to criticize the Gayraudistes as the Loisystes. The chosen ecclesiastical censor, Mourret, would have been satisfied with the criticism of Loisy and was offended by the criticism of the so-called traditional method.

On the same day, Mourret wrote to Blondel that the second edition of *L'Evangile et L'Eglise* is sold publicly in Paris. The situation is very critical: several priests are abandoning the ministry, and even all faith (*CCM*, 169). Mourret adds:

> L'idée de la condamnation par encyclique semble abandonnée. Il y aura bien, plus tard, une encyclique sur l'Ecriture Sainte. Mais d'abord paraîtra une condamnation par le Saint-Office. Un lettre de Rome, qu'on m'a lue hier, contient les renseignements suivants, que je cite de mémoire, mais à peu près textuellement: "Un personnage important assure que le Saint-Office travaille activement au document qui va bientôt paraîre. Mgr d'Albi reconnait lui-même que la condamnation s'impose." Est-ce bien vrai? Cette phrase doit être lue avec toutes réserves. A cette heure, personne ne défend plus ici l'abbé Loisy (*CCM*, 167; on the attitude of Mignot, see *HDC*, 476).

On December 17 again, Laberthonnière wrote to Blondel: "J'apprends--source abbé Duchesne--que le Pape avant de se prononcer sur Loisy l'étudie lui-même ... S'il y a condamnation, l'initiative viendra de lui et non du Saint-Office" (MMd, 41). In the same letter, Laberthonnière tells Blondel that Denis will sell them the Annales de philosophie chrétienne if his health obliges him to abandon them. In this way, writes Laberthonnière, "nous aurons donc du moins l'assurance qu'elle ne passera pas à l'ennemi" (MMd, 41). The enemy, of course, is the reactionary group of integrists and neoscholastics.

When Blondel finished his first draft of his critique of historicism on December 18, he sent it to Mourret; he then wrote to Auguste Valensin:

> J'ai voulu réserver mon temps, mes forces--ou ma faiblesse--à un article sur les erreurs de méthode et de doctrine de M. Loisy. Je viens de soumettre cet enfant de douleurs à des théologiens, et les voici partagés, les uns désirant la publication immédiate, les autres mettant leur veto. C'est demain (à Paris) que l'arbitre choisi prononcera sa sentence. Jamais travail ne m'a donné plus d'âffres que celui-là (BV, 108).

On December 21, Mourret informed Blondel that the newspapers have both announced and denied Loisy's condemnation. Apparently, Mgr Mignot has failed in his attempts to save Loisy. The Holy Office will extract some propositions from Loisy's books and condemn them in January. Hopefully, Blondel's article should be published before that fatal date (CCM, 167). In the same letter, Mourret adds that Blondel's correspondence with Loisy and Hügel should prepare him for his treatment of the fundamental question (CCM, 170; see BV, 116, where this section of the letter is dated December 23).

The following day, December 22, Mourret announced to Blondel:

> Hier, au moment où je vous écrivais, S.E. le Cardinal Richard venait de recevoir de Rome le document du Saint-Office portant condamnation de M. l'abbé Loisy. Je n'ai pas vu la pièce. Elle comprend deux parties: un jugement sur les doctrines de M. Loisy et une instruction adressée à Son Eminence. Il est possible que les journaux publient le document aujourd'hui même. Le Cardinal ne publiera rien avant d'avoir notifié la condamnation à l'intéressé. Prions pour lui (CCM, 167-168).[1]

On December 22 again, Blondel informed Wehrlé that he is progressing slowly and painfully in his criticism of the Gayraudistes and the Loisystes (BV, 116). From Rome where Mignot had gone to object to Denis' condemnation and to plead in favor of Loisy, the archbishop wrote to the latter:

> J'étais arrivé plein d'espoir et je pars plein de tristesse. Malgré tous les efforts de vos amis, vos adversaires triomphent! Le Pape, malgré ses bonnes dispositions pour vous, cède aux instances incessantes de certains membres de l'épiscopat français. On lui fait croire que jamais péril plus grand n'a menacé l'Eglise! La Revue Thomiste fait écho! (LOI, 27).

On December 23, Blondel sent to Mourret his first article, a criticism of extrinsicism: "Je viens de vous adresser ... mon premier article ... C'est la partie scâbreuse, celle où je prends mon élan sur les Gayraudistes pour foncer contre les Loisystes"

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[1] See the text of the letter of Cardinal Merry del Val to Cardinal Richard in A. Houtin, La Question biblique au XXe siècle, pp. 115-116.

(BV, 116 and CCM, 170). When Mourret received the first thirteen pages of Blondel, he became frightened by the latter's criticism of the so-called traditional method. Surely, extrinsicism is reactionary and provoked the opposite extreme position of historicism. But the big question remains for Mourret the following: "Est-on préparé à vous comprendre? Deux ou même trois articles peuvent-ils vous suffire à vous faire comprendre en une question qui soulève tant de problèmes?" Moreover, the criticism of the so-called orthodox position coming at the same time as Loisy's condemnation would certainly compromise Blondel. Yesterday, writes Mourret, after reading the criticism of extrinsicism, he could have suggested five or six modifications to attenuate its harsh tone. Today, he is more apprehensive and counsels Blondel to forego publication: "Je vous ai vu accusé de dénaturer l'apologétique traditionnelle pour mieux la combattre, et même, qui sait? de ne combattre l'historicisme que pour y substituer une erreur qui, d'après L'Ami du Clergé et le Bulletin de Toulouse, serait bien plus grave puisqu'elle atteindrait les fondements de la connaissance." These two periodicals were showing even more opposition to Blondel than to Loisy for his criticism of the scholastic theory of knowledge. Mourret fears that Blondel is going to compromise his future work. A few pages could not suffice to solve a complex question which embraces all of science, philosophy, and theology. It would be better to wait and treat all these problems completely and satisfactorily in "L'Esprit chrétien." Mourret gave Blondel's manuscript to Wehrlé who was asked to respond on the morrow (CCM, 171-172).

On December 27, Bremond wrote to Blondel: "Je lirai avidement votre anti-Loisy et je serai bien malheureux entre le coeur qui ira à vos raisons, et un coin de tête qui se cramponera à celles de cette philosophie à deux têtes, Loisy-Hügel" (CCM, 210). Bremond might have reminisced on Pascal's saying: "Le coeur a des raisons que la raison même ne connaît pas." As an historian, Bremond preferred the methodology of Loisy and Hügel; as a friend of Blondel, he had sentimental reasons to be on his side.

On December 28, Blondel wrote three letters, to Mourret, Wehrlé, and Loisy. First of all, he thanks Mourret for his sincere affection and solicitude; yet he mentions that he is writing to Wehrlé to be his advocate: "C'est pourquoi vous me pardonnerez de charger mon cher abbé Wehrlé d'être, en troisième et dernière instance, mon avocat auprès de vous, arbître souverain et irresponsable" [sic!] (CCM, 172). As a layman, Blondel finds it hard not being able to express freely what he believes are "pensées orthodoxes." Even those who condemn Loisy should grant that on certain points he is right, that certain traditional positions are no longer tenable, or even destructive of faith for many. In spite of the atmosphere of reaction and coercion which predominates in French Catholic circles, he does not believe that he risks himself condemnation by his one article. Finally, the condemnation of Loisy will not resolve the religious crisis which is misunderstood both at St. Sulpice in Paris and in Rome (CCM, 172-173).

To Wehrlé, Blondel wrote of his great disappointment concerning the attitude of Mourret: "S'il me peine, ce n'est pas surtout parce qu'il condamne à mort l'enfant de mes douleurs, de mes insomnies, de mes angoisses, c'est parce qu'il contredit une des lumières intérieures les plus vives que j'ai eues de ma vie" (CCM, 173; the underlining is mine). Ever since he wrote his famous Letter on Apologetics in 1896, Blondel never ceased to accumulate notes for a major criticism of the scholastic system which he now calls extrinsicism. At this crucial moment, Mourret, for the sake of prudence, is opposed to the publication of Blondel's most intimate convictions. The letter begs Wehrlé to be his advocate: "J'ose demander à votre amitié de tenter, en troisième délibération, un effort d'acquittement, ne pouvant confier à un meilleur avocat que vous une cause qui vous soit plus chère." Mourret has recognized the orthodoxy of Blondel's thought and expressions; he would be satisfied with a criticism of Loisy, but fears that a criticism of extrinsicism would be misunderstood by the majority of theologians. Blondel, however, does not want, like Batiffol, to make his own apology at the expense of Loisy. His purpose is twofold: "Montrer aux partisans de l'historicisme leurs torts, d'autant plus utilement que je reconnais leurs raisons, et empêcher le mouvement de réaction funeste de triompher absolument, au risque de nouvelles ruines spirituelles" (CCM, 173-174). Blondel wants to leave aside the extrinsic motives of his attitude: "Désir légitime de ne point paraître me dégager du Loisysme par tactique, souci charitable de ne pas accabler M. Loisy lui-même et de ne pas contrister, de ne pas m'aliéner ses amis en ne montrant que leurs erreurs, tout cela quoique important est accessoire" (CCM, 174).

The main objection of Mourret, "ne pas compromettre l'oeuvre future," is a misunderstanding of the present circumstances in which Blondel's via tertia could obviate the retrograde tendencies. Blondel recalls to Wehrlé that he received earlier the latter's praise for the providential temerity of the Letter on Apologetics. It would be cowardice today, continues Blondel, to avoid an action which his conscience urges him to accomplish. If he chose the secular life in preference to the clergy, it was for the sake of a greater intellectual freedom, "pour me permettre certaines initiatives qui eussent été impossibles à un prêtre menacé d'interdit, et astreint à un obéissance, à une réserve particulières" (CCM, 174). Blondel is convinced that something needs to be done to avoid the Religio depopulata. There is no reason to wait for better days when intellectual freedom within the Church might increase: "Mais la liberté, même la liberté des enfants de Dieu ne se reçoit pas, elle se prend; et si l'on parle des persécutions subies par les oeuvres de Dieu, il faut convenir que souvent elles sont venues des représentants officiels de Dieu sur terre. Et c'est la loi providentielle" (CCM, 175). There is so much servility that a time may come when one cannot write, "'il faut aimer Dieu,' sans lever le petit doigt comme un écolier qui demande la permission de placer un mot!" It would be better to sacrifice "l'oeuvre future" than to sacrifice the present interests of spiritual life. Blondel recalls Hügel's observation: "Détrompez-vous, the latter wrote, beaucoup resteraient hostiles à ce qui leur demande un effort de renouvellement intérieur et à ce qui sape leur idéal humain de pouvoir théocratique." Blondel adds: "Nous aurons éternellement à lutter contre le judaïsme." [Blondel was never anit-semitic, but he was opposed to the "judaic" narrowness and clericalism within the Church.] He wonders why he is not free to express his opinions for the benefit of innumerable young students and priests, at the risk of displeasing certain retrograde ecclesiastics. He wants to underline the human aspects and intellectual insufficiencies which veil the divine elements of the Church:

> Voyez, ce ne sont pas les preuves qui sont mauvaises, c'est l'usage que vous en faites; ce n'est pas la

> critique qui est pernicieuse, c'est la fausse philosophie qui s'y mêle sans que vous sachiez vous en rendre compte; n'allons donc pas de Charybde en Scylla, et reprenons le sens de la Tradition intégrale, qui est fondée non seulement sur les textes et sur la dialectique, mais sur l'expérience collective de l'Eglise et l'action permanente de son Fondateur (CCM, 175).

Neither textual criticism, nor dialectical reasoning alone suffices, according to Blondel, to relate history to dogma; there is need of the collective action of the Church and the perpetual action of Christ.

As Mourret was displeased with the criticism of extrinsicism, Blondel plans to justify the traditional positions at the end of his treatise. Consequently, he should not be accused of being a "Dreyfus"; the intrinsicism of his arguments should dispense him from the accusation of treason. Should Wehrlé share Mourret's negative attitude, he ought to send this letter to Fonsegrive who will need to fill the gap in La Quinzaine if Blondel's article is not to be published. Finally, if Mourret should change his mind, Blondel will not make him responsible for the consequences of his article. He believes that Mourret does not understand the crisis: "Peut-être que l'atomsphère sulpicienne ne réflète pas l'état des esprits laïcs ou même du monde religieux que la question Loisy a si diversement et si profondément ému" (CCM, 176). Blondel intends to strengthen the essential arguments of his letters to Loisy and Hügel in his second article.

Finally, on the same day, Blondel wrote to Loisy a letter of sympathy for the latter's condemnation by the Index:

> Vous ne doutez pas de la part douloureuse que je prends à votre épreuve; et c'est un besoin de coeur pour moi de vous dire que j'appelle sur vous la force et la lumière qui sont attachées aux grandes peines. Vous savez d'ailleurs quelles divergences fondamentales me séparent de vous; et la réflexion, la lecture de vos derniers écrits n'ont fait que me confirmer dans une partie des objections que je vous proposais. Au reste je n'ai pas encore connaissance du document du Saint-Office et j'ignore les propositions censurées. Vous avez d'ailleurs trop bien parlé de l'infaillible empirisme de l'Eglise dont les intuitions sont supérieures à toutes nos justifications rationnelles, vous avez trop bien prouvé par votre exemple la nécessité sociale de la discipline et de la docilité pour que j'hésite à accepter ces décisions quelles qu'elles soient et j'ai peur que quelques unes ne me coûtent autant qu'à vous, au moins dans les interprétations qu'on en donnera. Mais je voulais simplement, Monsieur l'Abbé, vous apporter une parole de sympathie, vous assurer que je prie de mon pauvre mieux pour vous, et vous offrir le témoignage de mon respectuex dévouement (LOI, 26).

On December 28, again, archbishop Mignot described for Loisy the two interviews he had with Pius X. During the first interview, the Pope informed him that the condemnation of Loisy was inevitable, but would be in the form of condemned abstract propositions, without any name of author. It was evident that the Pope was trying to react against the pressure exercised by several French bishops. Mignot was relieved, for he thought that Loisy would find it easy to justify himself. During his last papal interview, however, Mignot was told that the decree was ready for the condemnation of Loisy's works and would be published within a day or two. Mignot was dumbfounded:

"Que s'était-il passé entre les deux audiences? Quelles pressions plus instantes avaient été exercées de la part de Paris, d'Autun et autres ... je l'ignore, mais il y a eu quelque chose, j'en ai la certitude. J'ai essayé d'interroger: bouche close partout." Mignot informs Loisy that he will publish in Le Correspondant an article on "Critique et tradition": "J'y établis que la foi ne repose pas sur l"Ecriture, mais sur la tradition, comme vous le dîtes dans votre préface. Il fallait rassurer les esprits inquiets sans sacrifier la critique" (LOI, 27).

Mourret answered Blondel on December 28: "Je reçois par dépêche pneumatique ce mot de M. Wehrlé: 'Je viens de lire le manuscrit. Puisque vous m'avez provoqué à vous dire mon avis, le voici aussi sincère, aussi spontané qu'il est formel et ferme: il ne faut pas que Maurice Blondel publie cette étude'" (CCM,177). Apparently, Wehrlé had not yet read Blondel's pleading letter sent on the same day and was shocked like Mourret by Blondel's criticism of extrinsicism. At the risk of a condemnation, Mourret was ready to encourage Blondel in the criticism of historicism, but not in the criticism of what was accepted in ecclesiastical circles as the traditional position. He tells Blondel that L'Univers published the letter of Cardinal Merry del Val to Cardinal Richard announcing the condemnation of Loisy. A friend of Loisy, Felix Klein, assured Mourret that the former intends to submit to the ecclesiastical censure and to withdraw his books from circulation. But, so far, the exegete has received no word from the chancery of Paris (CCM, 168). Previously, on December 22, Mourret was sure that Cardinal Richard would not publish the condemnation before informing Loisy (see CCM, 168).

On December 29, Blondel informed Wehrlé that he will obey blindly and not publish: "Je m'incline, tourné vers la nuit complète et sacrifiant une clarté intérieure, une impulsion personnelle presque irrésistible. J'offre cette peine de plus à Dieu, sans même comprendre le motif raisonnable d'une telle décision" (CCM, 177). Blondel was convinced that at least in this case the authority of the Church requires blind obedience, and that he was to stifle his personal convictions as to what was best and bow to ecclesiastical censure. He fears, however, that if he is muzzled now, later it will be too late to speak out. This last month has exhausted him: his wife and all the members of his family have pressed him to devote himself to more peaceful occupations. Blondel is aware of the extreme importance of this occasion: "Il s'agit d'une crise, telle qu'au cours de ce qui me reste de vie je n'en recontrerai sans doute pas de plus dramatique. Ce que j'avais à dire contre Loisy, personne, je le crains, ne saura le dire, pour orienter ceux que son oeuvre a légitimement ébranlés" (CCM, 178). Wehrlé, after being an enthusiastic reader of Loisy, became his radical opponent; not everyone will do the same, says Blondel. If Loisy alone is condemned, there is danger that the choice will be limited to either "le déchainement du rétrogradisme meurtrier pour les esprits pénétrants et les âmes les plus ardentes"; or else "cet état d'aigreur, d'effervescence contenue ou même de révolte ouverte auxquels nous sommes exposés." It would seem, at least to an outside observer, that Blondel surrendered his responsibility to his ecclesiastical advisors and accepted mournfully his spiritual death (CCM, 178).

This expression of blind obedience and absolute confidence in the wisdom of his two theological advisors must have struck Wehrlé and Mourret. In the name of God, they accept the "sacrifice of Abraham" and modify their judgment. On December 30, Wehrlé sends a telegram. Mourret sends a letter in which he gives the green light to Blondel: "M. Wehrlé a dû vous envoyer hier soir la dépêche convenue: 'Sommes d'avis que vous devez suivre vos inspirations.' ... Donc, à la garde de Dieu." (CCM, 178-179). Undoubtedly, Blondel knows better the intellectuals who can benefit from his study, but Mourret knows better the ecclesiastics who will be opposed to it. According to the director of the Sulpician seminary, Blondel's expressions can be susceptible of a very Catholic interpretation, but they risk also an unfavorable reception. Once again, Mourret finds too severe the criticism of extrinsicism; nevertheless, he sent the manuscript to Fonsegrive. God will accept the "sacrifice of Abraham" which Blondel agreed to. Finally, Mourret believes that the second and third part of Blondel's treatise, that is, the criticism of historicism and the treatment of Tradition, will offset the negative impressions of the criticism of extrinsicism (CCM, 178-179).

On December 31, Blondel wrote to Laberthonnière: "J'ai usé le peu de tête qui me reste à un article de triage contre Gayraudistes et Loisystes. J'ai envoyé la première partie hier à Fonsegrive" (LAB, 133). According to Mourret, on January 1, 1904, Fonsegrive refused to publish the famous article (CCM, 181, note 1).

On January 1, Mignot wrote to Loisy:

> Les choses étant ainsi, il n'y a qu'à attendre la notification que vous fera le Cardinal Richard, et dans ces conditions c'est à lui que vous pourrez répondre. Il vous sera bien facile de dire que vous croyez à la divinité de Notre Seigneur et de l'Eglise! Il suppose bien qu'on n'exigera pas que vous croyiez comme de foi aux motifs de crédibilité sur lesquels s'appuieront les théologiens du Saint-Office! En tout cas, il n'y a qu'à attendre. De moins en moins je comprends la procédure suivie qui est contraire non seulement à ce que le Pape m'avait dit, mais à toutes les habitudes de la Curie (LOI, 27).

According to Mignot, the canonical procedures were not observed in the condemnation of Loisy. Furthermore, the exegete was required to make an absolute submission, not only externally, but also in conscience, a submission which made no distinction between his loyalty to Rome and his personal convictions as a critical scholar (see HDC, 253ff.).

On January 2, Victor Giraud again pressed Blondel to abstain from writing against Loisy. On the same day, Laberthonnière wrote that he was eager to read Blondel's article. He hopes that the philosopher of Aix will avoid all references to Loisy's condemnation, just as he tries himself to do in his book, *Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec*, in which chapters six to eight deal with the problem raised by Loisy's exegesis. Laberthonnière intends to show discretely his disagreement with Loisy (BL, 170).

In *Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec*,[1] Laberthonnière establishes a radical opposition between classical Greek philosophy, which unfortunately but inevitably served as the scholastic formulation of Christian doctrine, and fundamental Christianity. The classical Greek philosophers, he writes, identified being with ideas: as such, it was an idealism and a naive objectivism. In this rationalism and intellectualism, virtue and wisdom consisted in thinking ideas. Thought in its abstract and logical form, was the principle, the means, and the end of a happy life. Time, change, and matter were not objects for science, but for opinion only.

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[1] Republished recently (Paris: Seuil, 1966).

The ideal of the philosopher was to abandon to slaves the manual tasks of life and to devote himself to an isolated contemplation. He conceived an aristocratic city in which the philosopher enjoys ecstasy in the contemplation of eternal ideas, while merchants, soldiers, and slaves occupy themselves with temporalities.

In opposition to this superposition of ideas above reality and popular religion, Christianity maintains an incarnation of ideas within reality. While the Greek philosopher seeks the nature of things, what they are made of, the Christian seeks their history, where they come from and where they are going. The Bible is essentially an interpretation of the meaning of life and the world. Of course, says Laberthonnière, the Bible is filled with symbols; yet these symbols do not refer to abstract and logical entities, but to concrete and living realities. The biblical doctrine considers real beings in themselves, in their origin, development, and destiny. Consequently, historicity is an integral part of biblical doctrine. While the Greeks conceived a logical and abstract unity for their eternal world, the Christians seek unity in the interpretation of the intention of God in a created world. The Greeks were satisfied to conceive God idle in his thinking of ideas; the Christians believe in God eternally active, creating and activating everything in the world. The metaphysics of the Old Testament was an interpretation of nature and humanity; the metaphysics of the New Testament is a direct interpretation of Christ, based on his historical reality, a discovery through him of the presence and action of God the Father within men. What the evangelists wished to teach men is not so much the details of the life of Christ, as the meaning of the truth that he revealed: "C'est le Christ lui-même dans sa réalité intérieure, c'est la vérité du Christ, pour que nous croyions en lui et que par lui nous croyions en Dieu le Père. Ils ont fait oeuvre d'apôtres et non d'historiens" (p. 269).

Christ is not only a revealer of truth; he acts divine life in humanity: "Ce qu'il révèle, il le fait en le révélant. Il est ce qu'il dit" (p. 270). Instead of remaining a simple object for historical certitude, this reality becomes an object of faith. If it becomes an object of faith, it is not only as an external object for historical observation, but as the interior truth present within us, as the true meaning of our life and destiny. The evangelists wished to communicate faith. The New Testament doctrine involves a religious interpretation which transcends the observations of history and the abstractions of intellectualism.

Laberthonnière is opposed to an abstract dogmatism: "Les idées ne sont pas l'absolu ni l'image de l'absolu ... elles n'en sont que l'expression inadéquate qui marque et qui fixe pour nous ce que nous en avons conquis. Par là se trouve déterminée la portée de toutes les définitions domatiques" (p. 288). Dogmatic definitions point in the right direction rather than bind to a static conception. When Laberthonnière submitted his galley-proofs to Blondel, the latter suggested a distinction between faith (foi-confiance) and belief (foi-croyance). In a footnote, Laberthonnière had written:

> Il n'est peut-être pas inutile de remarquer que la foi a un double aspect. Elle consiste à se confier, à se donner; et en ce sens elle est un acte par lequel le subjet sort volontairement de lui-même en reconnaissant qu'il ne se suffit pas. Mais pour se confier, pour se donner il faut avoir et savoir à qui se confier, à qui se donner. Et c'est ainsi que la foi s'exprime toujours par des propositions qui affirment un objet déterminé. Il n'y a donc de foi que par affirmation d'un être en qui l'on se confie (p. 289).

At this point, on the galley-proofs, Blondel noted the following: "La foi-confiance implique toujours une foi-croyance; et la première peut être pleine, absolue, tandis que la deuxième est inadéquate, relative ou défaillante" (LAB, 195). In the published edition of his work, Laberthonnière added the following to his footnote:

> La foi-confiance implique toujours la foi-croyance, c'est-à-dire la foi qui affirme un object. Mais, tandis que comme confiance elle peut être pleine et absolue, comme croyance et comme affirmation elle peut être en même temps--et en ce monde au moins elle est inévitablement--inadéquate, relative ou défaillante (p. 289).

In their opposition to the naive objectivism and intellectualism of the neoscholastics, Blondel and Laberthonnière made a distinction between the absolutism of the act of faith and the relativism of dogmatic formulations. This position caused them endless problems: Laberthonnière's book was placed on the Index in 1906, while Blondel was criticized, but, protected by influential friends, he escaped official censure.

Christian faith, continues Laberthonnière, is a grace of God; but it involves always a personal commitment in which heart, intellect, and will enter into play. In agreement with Blondel, Laberthonnière maintains that historical science can never be separated from all metaphysics and doctrine. Even the hypotheses and interpretations of the critical historians include certain dogmatic and metaphysical principles. The religious problem, on the other hand, transcends the historical problem. Religion is not a conclusion of science, but an attitude in life. Undoubtedly, religion seeks to justify itself. But its justification is concrete, not abstract; it is pragmatic:

> Pour prouver qu'elle vit, elle organise. Elle intègre en elle successivement les aspects divers sous lesquels la réalité se présente. Et, en restant toujours la même, elle se renouvelle ainsi dans les âmes qui la vivent et dans les esprits qui la pensent. On comprend que ce ne soit jamais fini. Mais n'est-ce pas uniquement de cette façon, c'est-à-dire en vivant, que la vie se justifie et se fournit à elle-même sa raison d'être (p. 321).

While the object of historical sciences is the methodological knowledge of the past, what will be their use for the knowledge of Christian origins and development? Laberthonnière states that history has become a sort of psychology of humanity:

> L'histoire telle qu'on l'entend et telle qu'on la pratique consiste, non seulement à constater des événements et des faits extérieurs, mais encore à retrouver sous les événements et sous les faits les idées, les croyances, l'état d'âme, la vie en un mot des individus et des sociétés (p. 322).

The historian, as such, can describe and analyse the phenomena; when he decides to evaluate the fundamental meaning of events, he is no longer a mere spectator; he becomes an actor in the drama of human life. He projects something of himself in the interpretation that he gives to events and persons. Consequently, in reference to Christ, history is responsible for a double task: "Il y a lieu de distinguer le rôle de l'histoire en tant qu'elle a pour objet la réalité du Christ considérée dans son existence terrestre, et le rôle de l'histoire en tant qu'elle a pour objet la vérité du Christ considérée dans les témoignages qui l'ont exprimée" (p. 322). The reality of Christ is susceptible of historical observation in the same way as the existence of Alexander and Caesar; the truth of Christ is the object of faith, which is rooted in history. The truth of Christ is offered directly by the testimony of the Church: "Avec la vérité du Christ nous pouvons dire que nous avons aussi sa réalité humaine et temporelle, puisque sa vérité n'est que sa réalité humaine et temporelle qui, vivante et agissante, se prolonge jusqu'à nous par l"Eglise" (p. 323). It is by the truth of Christ that one reaches his reality. Historical observation is useful, but not essential to produce faith. It was not by means of flesh and blood that Peter was able to confess Christ as the Son of God. In the presence of the same acts of Christ, some believed and some refused to believe. It is within the Church and the stream of Christian tradition that one comes in contact with both the truth and the reality of Christ, present and active still today.

In his last chapter, Laberthonnière considers the reconciliation of immutability and mutability within Christianity. At the beginning of this chapter, Blondel suggested a distinction between evolution by development, ab intus, and evolution by coagulation, ab extra. As evolution "à la Spencer" was condemned repeatedly by Rome, Blondel wanted to spare Laberthonnière a new condemnation. Laberthonnière conceives the evolution within the Church, not as a discovery of new truths, but as a new light shed on revealed truths:

> On amène à lumière ce qui était dans la pénombre; on trouve le mot qui exprime pour soi et pour les autres la pensée qui s'élaborait depuis longtemps dans les profondeurs de la vie; on dévoile un aspect des questions qui avait été, non pas inaperçu, mais négligé, et qu'on fait surgir au premier plan (p. 338).

Laberthonnière recognizes that all progress in speculation involves a transposition of problems. Certain truths appear at times in conflict, at other times in harmony, depending on the point of view:

> Aussi ce qui caractérise toute conception et toute méthode qu'on appelle nouvelles et que quelqu'un vient à bout de préciser pour lui-même et pour les autres, c'est qu'ensuite il a conscience, lorsqu'il y réfléchit, qu'elles étaient déjà en germe, et même ordinairement beaucoup plus qu'en germe, dans les efforts de pensée faits avant lui et autour de lui. Et c'est si vrai qu'au moins après coup il en trouve partout des traces qu'il s'étonne de n'avoir pas vues plus tôt (pp. 338-339).

Thus the truth of Christ grows in the Church and by means of the Church, just as it grows in each one who seeks it, always old and always new.

If men can live and think the truth of Christ, says Laberthonnière, it is because it was lived and thought first of all by him. In this sense, it is right to say that Christ evolves within the Church, that his truth is developed; it is equally true to say that there is a development of Christ and his truth in individual Christians:

> A parler plus exactement, ce sont l'Eglise et les individus qui deviennent par lui et en lui. L'Eglise et les individus vivent de la vérité du Christ. Ils ne font pas la vérité du Christ en soi. Pour en vivre, ils la découvrent; ce qui est vrai, c'est qu'ils ne la découvrent qu'en la vivant. Cela suppose que la vérité du Christ est présente et agissante en eux. Mais il a fallu d'abord qu'elle fût présente et agissante en lui pour s'introduire par lui dans l'humanité (p. 339).

Opposed to this view of Christian development, says Laberthonnière, there are two mutually antagonistic groups: the "hellénisants," and the "judaïsants." Both of these groups identify reality with their ideas. The "hellénisants" prefer their abstract notion of Christianity to the beliefs and traditions of the crowds. This attitude is that of the Protestants, according to Laberthonnière. The "judaïsants" identify their static notion of tradition with their respect for the faith of their fathers. This attitude is that of the Catholic neoscholastics, claims Laberthonnière. In opposition to this rationalism and this traditionalism, which are simply different forms of individual absolutism and self-concentration, there is an attitude which recognizes that man is not self-sufficient, that he needs the past to live in the present, that he needs God and other men to remain open to the flow of life:

> Nous sommes fécondés, constitués même par ce qu'il nous apporte; fécondés et constitués par ce que Dieu met en nous; mais tout cela ne vaut pour nous, et par nous pour les autres, que si nous le faisons valoir personnellement. Un flot de vie qui a sa source dans l'éternité vient jaillir dans notre coeur; mais, au lieu de l'arrêter à nous ou de le laisser passer, il faut nous y jeter éperdument pour le grossir, le rendre plus entraînant et retourner avec lui à l'éternité (p.348).

In his letter of January 2, 1904, to Blondel, Laberthonnière mentioned that with several other priests he visited Loisy on the previous Sunday. The exegete is willing to withdraw the condemned books, but intends to continue with the publication of other studies. As the Holy Office did not dare to publish the decree already prepared, containing a certain number of condemned propositions taken from Loisy, Laberthonnière believes that the fundamental problem was not dealt with (MMd, 41).

On January 3, Loisy thanked bishop Lacroix for the favorable article in his Bulletin religieux and expressed his gratitude over the fact that the Roman Congregations avoided providentially to condemn his commentary on Le Discours sur la Montagne. He adds some recent information: "J'ai reçu le 31 décembre communication du décret du Saint-Office, par une lettre tout à fait convenable du Cardinal Archevêque de Paris ... Mon intention est d'accuser réception au Cardinal, et d'adresser ma réponse à S.E. Merry del Val, vers la fin de cette semaine. Je ne communiquerai rien aux journaux" (LAC, 24401). On the same day, Loisy wrote to Hügel: "Je suis étonné, très étonné, de trouver que vous attribuez au Saint-Office une autorité infaillible ... Une déclaration du Saint-Office ne s'adresse pas même à ma conscience comme une direction pleinement autorisée, ce que serait une définition pontificale" (AL, 118). Loisy hopes that this might be the last great trial pursued by the Holy Office. To Houtin, who believed with a great number of theologians of that period that a decree of the Holy Office required an internal assent in conscience, Loisy wrote on January 4: "J'avoue humblement ne rien comprendre à votre façon d'interpréter le décret du Saint-Office et la réponse que je m'y propose de faire" (AL, 118).

Again on January 4, Bremond told Loisy that he delayed writing him until he could read the authentic text of the Holy

Office. But he does not want to be the last to offer his affectionate sympathy to Loisy. Upon reading the decree, Bremond does not find it any more serious than would be a decree to fix the number of candles for high Mass. Undoubtedly, Loisy must have suffered from the rumors of newspapers, from the givers of advice, and from the "lâchage" of the prudent. Bremond has found in England many sympathizers for Loisy. He is hopeful for the future:

> Que de bien vous nous ferez encore, car enfin on n'imaginera pas une condamnation antécédente et a priori,--et entre parenthèses--comme tout ira mieux--et comme on se lâssera des condamnations, le jour, où paisiblement, tous les penseurs catholiques imprimeront ce qu'ils pensent, ce qu'ils savent--tout prêts d'ailleurs à s'incliner devant une mesure disciplinaire, et à recommencer le lendemain. Ce sera peut-être même le plus grand point de gagné, cette brèche au terrible préjugé qui faisait croire à tant d'honnêtes gens qu'ils devaient se soumettre aveuglément dès qu'une Congrégation a parlé et que dans l'Eglise, il n'y a pas de milieu entre la soumission aveugle (impossible évidemment) et la révolte. Permettez-moi de vous rappeler en cas de besoin que Fénelon a fait très formellement ses réserves sur la condamnation du Quiétisme (LOI,25).

Bremond is very displeased with the article of Ferdinand Prat against Loisy; he finds it worse than those of Brücker, the editor of Etudes. Loisy is fortunate to have friends as devoted as Hügel. Finally, Bremond assures him of his admiration and sincere affection (LOI, 25).

Blondel explained to Mourret on January 4 the reasons why it was important to criticize extrinsicism before criticizing "Loisysme" (CCM, 159). He suspects that some scholars of Fribourg are responsible for Fonsegrive's hesitation in publishing his article (CCM, 181). If Fonsegrive refuses, Blondel will offer his article to Bricout, for the Revue du clergé français (BV, 124). With great effort, he has begun the composition of his second article (CCM, 183). With a reference to a recent article in BLE, Blondel adds: "On nous rekantise à force, malgré toutes nos dénégations. Etre à la fois kantien et agnostique spencérien, c'est beaucoup à la fois; et je m'étonne de n'avoir pas encore pris feu" (CCM, 303). Finally, in the same letter, Blondel adds: "Le P. Portalié, vous l'avez vu sans doute, me dénonce comme responsable de la théorie de M. Loisy sur les miracles" (CCM, 316).

As some newspapers continued to publish all kinds of false rumors, Loisy inserted a clarifying note in L'Eclair on January 5: "L'Abbé Loisy ne s'est pas rétracté en quoi que ce soit et sous aucune forme, et n'a fait encore aucune démarche relative à sa condamnation" (AL, 119). On the same day, he thanked Cardinal Richard for the delicate manner according to which he was notified of his condemnation and informed him that he would express to the Cardinal Secretary of State his acceptance of the judgment of the Sacred Congregations (AL, 119). The following day, Loisy resumed his lectures at the Sorbonne in the presence of a much larger audience.

On January 6, Mourret was still apprehensive for Blondel:

> Certes, vous voilà bien averti des oppositions, des attaques peut-être qui vous attendent des deux côtés à la fois. Je ne regrette pas de vous avoir signalé celles que votre critique de l'extrinsécisme va soulever. Je les prévois plus que jamais, parce que je les entends chaque jour.--Mais je n'aurais pas crû à une sympathie si grande pour les idées et la méthode de M. Loisy de la part de quelques-uns de vos et de nos amis.--Les deux critiques se feront-elles compensation? Je ne le prévois pas humainement. Je l'espère d'une disposition de la Providence, qui veille sur les bonnes volontés (CCM, 179-180).

Mourret is sure that Blondel will encounter a large opposition even though he believes in the orthodoxy of his ideas.

On January 8, Wehrlé encouraged again Blondel: "L'influence de l'abbé Loisy doit être combattue autrement que par des condamnations qui l'exaltent autant qu'elles le diminuent à certains égards" (CCM, 180). Blondel must speak out to conjure a twofold peril: "Péril de la foi qui s'isole, péril de la foi qui se dissout; péril de la société religieuse qui se ferme, péril de la société religieuse qui ouvre ses portes non pour faire entrer 'les autres', mais pour sortir et déménager" (CCM, 180-181). If Fonsegrive refuses to accept Blondel's articles in La Quinzaine, they must be printed elsewhere, anywhere: "Mais il faut paraître ... Paraissez, paraissez vite, paraissez tout. Le reste est à Dieu" (CCM, 181). On the other hand, on the same day, l'abbé Pêchegut sent to Blondel a long apology for Loisy (mentioned only in BV, 116 and CCM, 182).

Again on January 8, Loisy wrote a long letter to T. B. Saunders, a correspondent for Times and the English translator of Harnack's What is Christianity. Concerning his condemnation, Loisy makes these observations:

> J'ai dit assez clairement dans mes deux petits livres ce que je pense touchant le rôle enseignant de l'Eglise et les inconvénients que peut présenter ce que je me suis permis d'appeler le régime intellectuel du catholicisme, pour que vous deviniez sans peine comment je pourrais parler de la censure, si c'était un autre qui fût censuré. J'estime que je dois témoigner du respect pour cet acte d'une autorité que je crois nécessaire au maintien de la vérité chrétienne dans le monde. Mais ce respect ne fait pas tort à celui que je dois à la vérité même. Catholique j'étais, catholique je reste; critique j'étais, critique je reste.
>
> Notez, Monsieur, que si l'on blâme publiquement mes opinions, l'on ne demande pas d'y renoncer... La censure dont mes écrits ont été frappés ne gênera pas et je ne crois même pas que, dans la pensée de ses auteurs, elle soit destinée à entraver mon activité scientifique...
>
> Au fond, rien n'est changé dans la situation du catholicisme; il n'y a que cinq livres de plus au catalogue de l'Index.
>
> Ce qui peut se trouver de bon dans ces livres ne sera perdu pour personne et quelques uns de ceux mêmes qui m'ont combattu sont tout prêts à le faire valoir. Je n'ai jamais envisagé l'avenir avec plus de confiance que dans ce temps-là où l'on disait que l'Eglise à laquelle j'appartiens condamne l'oeuvre de toute ma vie. Peut-être ne la condamne-t-elle pas autant qu'il le semble. Pour un peu, j'oserais dire qu'elle ne la condamne pas autant qu'elle-même le croit (AL, 119-120).

On January 9, La Semaine religieuse of Paris announced the submission of Loisy. This information was corrected by a note in L'Eclair, on January 10: the letter of Loisy to Cardinal Richard was not meant for publication and was meant only to acknowledge the communication of the decree of condemnation (AL, 120). On January 11, Loisy wrote to Cardinal Merry del Val. He respects the judgment of the Roman Congregations, condemns himself in his books everything that is reprehensible, recognizes that his submission is purely disciplinary, and reserves the rights of his conscience and his opinions as an historian and a critical exegete (AL, 120-121).

On January 10, Mignot published in Le Correspondant his article entitled "Critique et Tradition," in which he repeated a phrase of saint Augustine to the effect that the Church is not based on the Bible, but rather the Bible on the Church. The Church rests on Jesus whose divinity was an object of faith before the Gospel was written down. The Gospel was preached before it was written; it is essentially a Tradition: "Aucune histoire ne nous racontera jamais la révélation du Sauveur Jésus comme le fait pratiquement l'Eglise depuis dix-neuf siècles par son action vivante, efficace, visible, perpétuelle et surnaturelle." Neither biblical exegesis, nor historical criticism suffice to produce faith in the divinity of Christ and of the Church; it is only within Tradition that one can understand the development of doctrine.

On January 14, Mourret continued his encouragement of Blondel: "Courage! Dieu le veut! Mettez-vous à l'oeuvre comme pour une croisade" (CCM, 181). He finds it strange that the young generations should reject scholasticism while the older generations ignore contemporary thought: "Impossible, semble-t-il, de concilier les deux tendances. Vous allez le tenter. Il faut que vous le tentiez. C'est la volonté de Dieu" (CCM, 181). The following day, Wehrlé renewed his support of Blondel: "Courage, ami! Tenez ferme: donnez votre composition coûte que coûte, et faîtes-la paraître, telle quelle, avec grande confiance. Dieu vous bénira" (CCM, 181).

History and Dogma, Part one

Blondel's treatise, History and Dogma, was first published as three articles in La Quinzaine, on January 16, February 1 and 16, 1904.[1] Three translations have already been made, in Italian, in German, and in English.[2] Blondel made a choice between three subtitles for his treatise *History and Dogma*: the first subtitle was, "Comment résoudre le conflit de l'histoire et du dogme"; the second, "Où s'arrête la compétence de l'histoire en face du dogme"; the third was finally accepted, "Les lacunes philosophiques de l'exégèse moderne." The first plan was to solve a crisis between history and dogma. Blondel realized that he was neither an historian, nor a theologian. The second plan was a believer's defense of orthodoxy against the challenges of historical criticism. The third plan was accepted by the philosopher because it fell within his professional competence.

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[1] 56 (1904), 145-167; 349-373; 433-458. A limited offset edition of the three articles was reserved for private distribution: Histoire et dogme: Les lacunes philosophiques de l'exégèse moderne (La Chapelle-Montligeon, 1904). This edition was finally republished in Les Premiers Ecrits de Maurice Blondel. Volume 1 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), pp. 149-228.

[2] Storia e dogma. Trad. a cura di E. Carpita et M. Casotti (Firenze: Vallechi, n.d.): Geschichte und Dogma. Übers. von A. Schette. Mit Einführungen von J.B. Metz und R. Marlé (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald Verlag, 1963); History and Dogma, translated by Alexander Dru in The Letter on Apologetics and Dogma (London: Harvill Press, 1964; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965). All quotations in this dissertation will be taken from the latter English translation. Some of the most important commentaries on History and Dogma are the following: L. Coutinho, Tradition et histoire dans la controverse moderniste (1898-1910) (Rome: Gregorianum, 1954); R. Marlé, Au coeur de la

In a footnote to the title of the first article on *History and Dogma*, there is an editorial remark which was not included in the English translation, but is to be found in the French edition of 1956. Since the name of Blondel was mentioned so often in the recent exegetical controversies, the philosopher was invited to express his personal views, without involving

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crise moderniste (Paris: Aubier, 1960); G. Martini, *Cattolicesimo e storicismo: momenti d'una crisi del pensiero religioso moderno* (Napoli: Ed. scientifiche italiane, 1951); M. Nédoncelle, "Histoire et Dogme, ou l'exigence de tradition active." *Giornale di Metafisica*, 16 (1961), 576-590; R. Saint-Jean, *L'Apologétique philosophique: Blondel, 1893-1913* (Paris: Aubier, 1966); C. Troisfontaines, "Le Christ 'lien substantiel' dans les premiers écrits de Maurice Blondel." (Dissertatio ad lauream in facultate theologica, Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, Romae, 1965); R. Virgoulay, "Une contribution de la philosophie à la théologie. Etude sur la tradition d'après *Histoire et Dogme* de Maurice Blondel." *RSRUS*, 39 (1965), 48-67.

the responsibility of La Quinzaine. The latter part of this editorial note was written by Blondel himself: "Ces pages étaient écrites avant les actes récents de l'Autorité, avant même que l'auteur eût connaissance de la procédure engagée contre les livres censurés. Un retard dans la publication de cette étude--retard dont la cause est facile à comprendre--n'en rend la lecture que plus opportune aujourd'hui."

The first article was preceded by an open letter, dated November 20, 1903, addressed to Fonsegrive, director of La Quinzaine. In this letter, Blondel answers a rhetorical question: "You have asked what my attitude is to the difficulties raised by the biblical problem in its present state, and how, in so far as it falls within my sphere of competence, I envisage the methodological and doctrinal questions by which many minds at the present time are disturbed" (HD, 221). Rhetorical question indeed. There is no evidence of such a demand on the part of Fonsegrive. In 1928, Blondel repeated the same rhetorical assertation: "En 1904, je composai Histoire et Dogme sur la demande de mon cher Georges Fonsegrive pour signaler les lacunes philosophiques et historiques d'une exégèse selon moi scientifiquement et catholiquement intenable."[1] On

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[1] F. Lefèvre, L'Itinéraire philosophique de Maurice Blondel (Paris: Spes, 1928), p. 82.

April 30, 1903, Bricout asked in vain from Blondel an article on L'Evangile et L'Eglise for the Revue du clergé français (CCM, 159; this letter is dated October 30 in BV, 114). It was not until the middle of December that Blondel took the initiative to offer his article to Fonsegrive (CCM, 169). For a long time, there were indications that Fonsegrive would refuse to publish it: for instance, on the 1st, on the 4th, and even on the 8th of January 1904, a week before it was eventually published (see CCM, 181 and BV, 124). It was not Fonsegrive, but Wehrlé and Mourret who encouraged Blondel to take position in the modernist crisis.

The biblical problem, wrote Blondel, brought to the attention of a reading public still attached to the scholastic synthesis and unprepared to appreciate the values of the new critical and historical methods, was causing great havoc: either outright condemnation of the modern methods, or eager shedding of the old patterns. Conscious that he was neither a theologian, nor a biblical scholar, nor an historian, Blondel attempted, nevertheless as a professional philosopher, to sketch the "prolegomena to all future exegesis."

Blondel was fully aware of a mounting crisis "which set catholic against catholic in every order--social, political, philosophical" (HD, 221). He should have added, among others, biblical and historical. The problem was the conflict of "two quite incompatible 'catholic mentalities,' particularly in France. And that is manifestly abnormal, since there cannot be two Catholicisms" (HD, 221). For years, in his private notes, Blondel sketched repeatedly the outline of these two mentalities. He was planning to discuss them in a great book, "L'Esprit chrétien".[1]

In History and Dogma, Blondel wished to confine himself to one fundamental problem, that of the "relation of dogma and history"; in other words, the relation between the necessary authority of doctrinal formulae and the critical method. Under various forms, this same problem occupied a central place in his whole philosophy: that is, the relations between faith and reason, the encounter of Christianity in its supreme heteronomy and of philosophy in its full autonomy. This problem is indeed as old as Christianity and has not yet received a fully satisfactory answer.

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[1] See AP, 250-253; 259-265; 289-292). Among the reasons why he never published that book according to its original plan are the following: (1) he was laboring under strong suspicions of heterodoxy; (2) in 1906, the book of his friend, Laberthonnière, Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec, the proofs of which he had corrected in 1904 and which he approved wholeheartedly, was placed on the Index; (3) he was intimately involved in the Modernist movement which was officially condemned by Pius X in 1907; (4) he met the opposition of "L'Action française" and described their totalitarian alliance of atheists, with Catholics, royalists, and traditionalists in 1910 under the pseudonym Testis, in La Semaine Sociale de Bordeaux et le Monophorisme; (5) in 1913, the Annales de philosophie chrétienne, which he owned and in which he wrote regularly, mostly under pseudonyms, were placed on the Index.

I. The Problem

According to Blondel, two schools of thought are in conflict; both claim to maintain the rights of reason and the attitude of faith; both affirm that facts possess an independent consistency and that faith in its turn illuminates and guarantees the facts; "in a word, that the Bible upholds the Church just as the Church upholds the Bible." Both schools, nevertheless, accuse one another of endangering religion. The conflict will not be solved by a reference to facts and texts, for both schools invoke these in their favor. The root of the conflict is more profound. Nor will it be solved by a preliminary discussion of "the legitimate claims of the historical method and the rules for the interpretation of official documents; for they are interpreted in opposite senses, since the rules of exegesis and the necessary prolegomena of biblical criticism are themselves dominated by the problem both old and new which we have to solve."

Since Blondel, in the limits of his competence as a philosopher, has no right to call upon the supreme ecclesiastical authority to solve this dilemma, he plans to examine the philosophical premises at the root of the present misunderstandings.. "If Christian facts (history) and Christian beliefs (dogma) coincided in the light of immediate experience or complete evidence; if one only had to believe what others have seen and affirmed, the difficulty would not arise." For the sake of argumentation, Blondel created a false dilemma: facts cannot be called "Christian" unless they are viewed with the eyes of faith; consequently, "Christian facts" can be neither independent of, nor opposed to "Christian beliefs."

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, it is impossible to know scientifically and to believe the same thing under the same aspect. The neo-Thomists at the beginning of this century were dividing neatly between the area of science and the area of faith. Because they viewed theology as the "queen of sciences" and philosophy as the handmaid of theology, they thought that modern science could in no way whatsoever disturb the traditional dogmatic formulations. Either science and philosophy agreed with theology and thus received "droit d'entrée"; or else they conflicted and were to be rejected as "errors and heresies." No sincere Catholic could doubt, as the first Vatican council declared, the fundamental harmony between science and faith. A conflict between these two could arise only when one's science was insufficient, one's intelligence obscured, or one's morals deficient.

As a modern critical philosopher, Blondel sought to work out a synthesis of faith and reason independently of the scholastic system. Surely Catholic faith is based on historical facts, but these facts by themselves neither engender faith, nor suffice to justify it entirely. Catholic faith guarantees certain facts and draws from them "a doctrinal interpretation which convinces the believer as would a historical reality itself, but on other grounds than those which the historian is able to verify." Discounting for the sake of argumentation an immediate recourse to divine grace, Blondel seeks "an explanatory principle" to account for "the movement from the historical data to a faith which goes beyond what these provide for an ordinary witness--and the movement from faith to really objective affirmations and to realities which constitute Sacred History inserted into the heart of ordinary, everyday history, and incarnating the ideas in the facts." This movement is very complex: it is not only a double coming and going between fact and faith; there is also a distinction between Sacred History and ordinary, everyday history, between Christian facts and ordinary facts. Faith is already involved in the observation and interpretation of facts.

According to Blondel, this fundamental question for Catholic exegesis has never been treated for its own sake. Surely there is no problem for the ordinary believer. But the scholar cannot simply juxtapose the scientific method and the attitude of faith. It is equally wrong "to behave as though history had to depend absolutely on dogma," and on the other hand "as though dogma had to proceed exclusively from history and be subordinate to it." There is something before, beside, and beyond historical research and dogmatic formulation; there is "the normal way by which the sacred deposit develops, by which it will always adapt itself to the course of history." In other words, there is a development of revelation and a pragmatic adaptation of the Church in the course of history. In the original, Blondel wrote: "Car la façon dont le passé théologique a interprété légitimement les faits en s'y alimentant nous doit instruire de la manière normale dont se développe le dépôt sacré et dont il s'adaptera perpétuellement au cours des hommes et des choses" (p. 153).

II. Incomplete and Incompatible Solutions

The reader must remember that Blondel is making a phenomenological epochè, a methodological bracketing of divine grace in his search of a principle to effect the synthesis of facts with faith. He proceeds with another form of the dilemna. Since neither facts nor ideas, that is, neither history nor dogma, by themselves suffice for faith, there is need to find a common ground on which both can exchange and enter into a fertile contact. In recent discussions, according to Blondel, unsatisfactory theories have been advanced, which were fortunately corrected by unformulated counter-theories. Even though his two theological advisors, Mourret and Wehrlé, pressed Blondel to refute directly Loisy, and even if the majority of commentaries on History and Dogma have continued this interpretation, Blondel, both in his private correspondence and in this treatise, rejected such an interpretation: "I have, therefore, no one in particular in mind. I have isolated certain abstract theses and presented them with a clarity and a rigour which they do not possess in reality" (HD, 225; see also HD, 258).

At a time when Loisy was discredited, when so many defenders of the traditional formulations were joining the chorus of condemnations, it would have been easy for Blondel to follow suit. But he could no more agree with the philosophical premises of the traditionalists whose Christian faith he shared entirely than with the endangering of that faith by Loisy's use of a critical and exegetical methodology, which was parallel and complementary to his own philosophical system. In order to emphasize that he was dealing with "abstract entities" rather than taking sides in a conflict between definite persons, Blondel made use of "barbarous neologisms":

extrinsicism and historicism. He thus characterized two extreme, incomplete, and opposite answers, suffering from analogous philosophical lacunae, both pretending to save faith, both making use of a hybrid of the old scholastic system incoherently mixed with some elements of modern positive sciences and critical methodology, and leading eventually either to the subjection of faith to science (thus to rationalism and loss of faith), or to the subjection of science to faith (thus to fideism and the rejection of modern science). He hoped "to achieve the synthesis of history and dogma while respecting their independence and solidarity, which are both equally necessary" (HD, 224).

1. Extrinsicism

Throughout his career as a philosopher, Blondel developed a method of immanence while maintaining a doctrine of transcendence, that is, he emphasized the autonomy of reason while maintaining the heteronomy of divine revelation and of the institutional Church. To his mind, no truth, not even revealed truth, can gain any value for man unless there corresponds a process of assimilation and personal expression. Only then does truth become life. Moreover, since the intellectual activity is not equivalent to the whole of human life, no speculative synthesis can ever by itself exhaust the whole of reality. Thought, immanent in human action, transcends it by its abstract precision; human action, of which intellectual activity is an element, is partly immanent in thought, and partly transcends it by endless development. Although for motives of Catholic orthodoxy he did not appreciate the term "pragmatism," Blondel seems pragmatic in his efforts to formulate explicitly what he lived and believed implicitly. He sought to counter-balance the excesses of the so-called objectivity of both positive sciences and scholasticism by an emphasis on subjectivity. Since the neoscholastics, with their naive realism, were dominating the intellectual circles of the Catholics in France, they were his worst enemies. He describes here their system leading to the two extreme forms of extrinsicism and historicism.

The problem which needs solution is "the relation of facts to dogmas," and "the determination of the Christian supernatural." To the extrinsicist, the facts are merely a point of departure, "signs to the senses" and "common-sense proofs." They serve as the premises for a syllogism which concludes to the presence of the supernatural. Once this presence has been determined, rational procedures can deduce the required universal conclusions. The facts are never considered for their own sakes, in their milieu, but simply in their extrinsic stimulation for the recognition of the miraculous or supernatural.

In his famous Letter on Apologetics, Blondel wrote that miracles and prophecies are proofs only for those who are ready to understand them:

> There is nothing more in a miracle, if one thinks it out fully, than in the most ordinary events. But equally there is nothing less in the most ordinary events than in a miracle ... So miracles are truly miraculous only for those who are already prepared to recognize the divine action in the most usual events (L, 135).

When he was told that he was thus going against tradition and the first Vatican council, Blondel referred to a passage of St. Augustine and said that he believed in the objective value of miracles, in re, but that, quoad nos, subjectively, reason alone cannot discern the supernatural element without faith and divine grace. As a safeguard in History and Dogma, he notes: "It should be superfluous to note that I in no way deny the reality or the demonstrative force of signs and miracles: I am only criticizing the incomplete use which certain apologists make of them" (HD, 226).

The extrinsicist has no genuine respect for facts. He does not consider "their real relation to the milieu in which they appeared," but only "their accidental, extrinsic and generic character," their miraculous and supernatural aspect. "This means to say that a sign, a label, is simply detached from the facts and placarded at the entry to the dogmatic fortress." The supernatural element remains external both to the events and to the ideas. The extrinsicist is interested in facts only for their apologetic use: "whether this or that miracle is involved, provided it is a miracle, the argument is the same." There is a purely external relation between the miraculous and a particular historical event invested with it, between ideas and facts.

At this point, Blondel would have liked to publish his fundamental criticism of the scholastic theory of knowledge. If he had done so, very likely he would have been condemned immediately. As a matter of fact, his description of extrinsicism, as an offshoot of scholasticism, brought to Blondel the strongest objections from several theologians. Mourret feared that many readers would see in his criticism a rejection of traditional apologetics (CCM, 171). Gayraud declared that extrinsicism was canonized by the first Vatican council (HDC, 568). Luckily, Blondel was mild in the criticism which he published. He described the neoscholastic epistemology as a naive realism:

> There is no knowledge which does not derive from sensation and that does not draw its whole matter from an external empirical fact: gross perceptions, as Leibnitz would have said, are the only gateway to the soul, the only initial ingredient of science. That being so, the supernatural itself can only be known, really known, in so far as it is originally offered under the guise of an external perception, so that the scientific knowledge which we might humanly acquire about it would never be greater than that which can be furnished by the given fact and its elaboration by the reason. Having entered the realm of the supernatural, the theologians will, no doubt, organize a science of Revelation (HD, 227).

Blondel returns to his original contention that history does not suffice where dogma is concerned, nor facts, where faith is involved. It is not sufficient to say that divine grace gives to brute facts their plus-value: "for short of falling into pure fideism, the act of faith must embrace the material of a human act." Those who uphold scholarly and complex methods "are just those who are most suspicious of abstract, scholastic ratiocination, particularly when it is a matter of planting in us and of justifying the total demands of a religion which lays claim to the whole man." The relations between the sign and the thing signified, between facts and theology, between our thought and the truths proposed from outside are purely external for extrinsicism: "it lacks the strength to make life circulate between faith and dogma or between dogma and faith," that is, between the perception of the supernatural and its intellectual expression.

In the realm of biblical studies, the extrinsicist is first of all concerned "to establish that God has acted and spoken, not to examine what he said and did through human agencies." He has little interest in the historical aspect of the facts and the internal criticism of texts. "The Bible is guaranteed en bloc, not by its content, but by the external seal of the divine; why bother to verify the details? It is full of absolute knowledge, ensconced in its eternal truth; why search for its human conditions or its relative meaning?"

The extrinsicist takes the texts literally and subjects them to his dogmatic ideology: "the ageless facts are without local colour, vanish, as the result of a sort of perpetual docetism, into a light that casts no shadow, and disappear beneath the weight of the absolute by which they are crushed."

Such an attitude fears the challenge of critical interpretation which would undermine the intransigent absolutism of its thesis; it is "an ostrich-like policy." Before the discoveries of archaeology and philosophy accumulated new evidence, it was possible to feel secure in the dogmatic bastion. But now, this period of quietude has gone. The result was twofold: some rejected modern critical studies; others rejected faith.

After this preamble, Blondel comes to the principal purpose of his study. In opposition to extrinsicism, historicism was developed as "the impartial expression of free and disinterested research"; and yet, it is still another offshoot of scholasticism, "adding a good deal not only of pseudo-philosophy but of philosophy which is false."

2. Historicism

When Blondel described historicism, Mourret wished that it would be a complete refutation of Loisy. As a matter of fact, this has been the interpretation given by some of the latest commentators on History and Dogma.[1] Some evidence for this understanding can be found in Blondel's correspondence with certain of his theological advisors. In his treatise, however, as well as in several other letters, Blondel definitely excluded any intention of directly contradicting Loisy. Laboring under the suspicion that Loisy no longer believed in the divinity of Christ, Blondel was surely looking for the flaw in his historical methodology. But he preferred to draw a caricature of an historical methodology which neglects faith at the point of departure, and consequently can never reach it at the point of arrival. He had many historians other than Loisy in mind, in particular, Mignot, Batiffol, Duchesne, and even Lagrange, as some letters quoted in the next chapter will show. The major flaw of historicism, according to Blondel, is due to the scholastic dichotomy between faith and science, between what one knows and what one believes. Consequently, if the proper object of faith is distinct from the proper object of science, the logical issue of historicism would be the same as that of extrinsicism, that is, a purely extrinsic juxtaposition of science and faith. Such a juxtaposition could not fail but end with the rejection of either faith or science, with scientism or fideism. The only way of obviating these disasters, according to Blondel, would be through the use of the method of immanence which he never ceased proposing since his thesis on L'Action in 1893.

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[1] See CCM for example.

At first sight it seems that if science is compatible with faith, it should be possible to discover the Christian supernatural in the realities of history. In his search for facts, the extrinsicist tries to relate dogma which he has formulated in a narrow ideology, and history which he has transformed into "an allegory to which, subsequently, all the realism of the Christian's life has to be attached; but only a painted chain can be hung on a painted nail." As the synthesis presented by the positive historian is an abstraction from real life, Blondel considers it insufficient to account for the realism of Christian life.

In opposition to the extrinsicist, the historicist considers "the facts for their own sakes, and instead of looking for dogma and its abstract formula in history," he looks "for history and history alone even in regard to dogma." Blondel claims that historical observation and interpretation of facts are no less abstractions than dogmatic formulations.

In line with the first Vatican council, Blondel wished to maintain that both "history, like all sciences, has a consistency of its own and a relative autonomy," and "dogma does not disregard historical facts." The real problem then is to establish a methodology which will respect both the autonomy of science and the heteronomy of Christian faith, for "the Christian facts do not, by common consent, suffice for Christian beliefs." This last statement of Blondel is very misleading. Of course, bare facts do not suffice for Christian beliefs; but when Blondel speaks of "Christian facts" does he not already presuppose "Christian beliefs"? Blondel is not so much concerned here with faith which allows a Christian "reading" of facts, but with a scientific method which could possibly serve "to augment the obscure meaning of the facts and to extract faith in the invisible supernatural from visible events." While extrinsicism, imprisoned in its ideology, was unable to digest new facts, historicism, in its methodological abstraction, is unable to sustain the weight of ancient faith. As he disapproves of a dogmatic refutation of the critical and historical methodology, Blondel adopts a purely rational viewpoint to criticize historicism. "It is only after showing on neutral ground its philosophical lacunae (A) that I shall indicate, as a consequence of its false principles or of their application, the inadequacy or the dangers of its apologetic (B)."

A. What are the philosophical lacunae of historicism? A good historian must realize the insufficiency of a critique of texts and testimonies and be aware that historical knowledge as such is conditioned by a critique of knowledge itself.

History is not absolutely self-sufficient; it depends upon a number of other sciences; it remains dependent upon ulterior problems; it presupposes a Weltenschauung. The conflicts between history and dogma, illustrated by the two extreme attitudes of historicism and extrinsicism, is due to a mixture of two incompatible conceptions of science, the ancient and the modern.

According to the Aristotelian conception of science, writes Blondel, the disciplines differ from each other by their generically different principles and objects. They pursue their task independently; "each one of them adds its contingent of absolute truths to the sum total of knowledge." Each contributes a piece of reality itself; each yields its fragment of ontology. Consequently, "the sciences appear to be independent in their researches and bound by their mutual results"; "and this takes place, throughout, in a sphere of realist affirmations, which allow of no concessions, and provoke irreconcilable conflicts and contradictions."[1]

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[1] Of course, the historians of philosophy of the mid-Twentieth century will disagree with Blondel's criticism of the Aristotelian conception of science; they have the benefit of a more adequate historical knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy. One must keep in mind that Blondel had before his eyes what the neoscholastics were writing at the beginning of this century. In this narrow perspective, his criticism struck its target.

According to the modern view, continues Blondel, "the various scientific spheres are in perpetual communication." Under the misleading names of determinism and universal solidarity, there is a sound conception of modern science: "to the critical mind there is no question of affirming, from a metaphysical point of view, the subordination or fusion of beings in an absolute monism." There is a suspension of judgment on metaphysics until the epistemological problem has been solved. The problem of knowledge, the total activity of the mind, and the combined data of the various sciences must be understood before discussing the problem of existence. Phenomenology must precede metaphysics. Therefore, modern sciences differ less with respect to their objects, than with respect to methodology: "there is continuity and solidarity in the work of the mind; there is heterogeneity in the points of view and in the bearing of scientific affirmations; there is subordination of all the relative scientific data to the fundamental problems and the final solutions." Since modern sciences deal with a relative viewpoint, none claims to be absolutely autonomous.

In the case of history, for example, "while the historian has, as it were, a word to say in everything concerning man, there is nothing on which he has the last word." According to Blondel, the object of modern history is "everything in the social life of mankind which can be verified or testified to, and everything which, with these facts as the basis of induction, is an explanation of the fieri of mankind, and a definition of the laws of its continuous and continual movement. The historian attempts first of all to become the perpetual contemporary of vanished ages and to picture them as might a universal witness, with the help of a detailed and synthetic view of the whole series which no partial or passing spectator could embrace; he then proposes to reintegrate scientifically, not the reality of life itself, but as intelligible an expression as possible of that reality and an explanation of the determinism which--to all appearances--links together the successive moments."

The historian, according to Blondel, sees only the observable manifestations; he does not see the spiritual reality which is revealed incompletely. As a scientist, the historian tries to make "the determinist explanation as intelligible and complete as possible," to link together all the historical phenomena. It is his duty, however, "to leave the issue open or even to open it as widely as possible to the realist explanation which lies always beneath." In other words, Blondel limits the historical sciences to the phenomena and reserves to metaphysics and theology the interpretation of the noumena. Furthermore, he tries to equate history with other positive sciences in which the laws of determinism and universal solidarity are the controlling factors.

The historical explanation of a fact is never exhaustive, according to Blondel; beyond the observable phenomena, there lies a noumen. "Real history is composed of human lives; and human life is metaphysics in act." An historian who rejects all metaphysics is the victim of illusions and prejudices. "In default of an explicit philosophy, a man ordinarily has an unconscious one. And what one takes for simple observations of fact are often simply constructions." No one limits himself to pure phenomena; everyone imagines something beyond: "for behind what he sees the witness puts an action and a soul so as to give the fact a meaning; behind the witness and his testimony, if they are really to enter history, the critic puts an interpretation, a relation, a synthesis; behind these critical data the historian inserts a general view and wider human preoccupations; which is to say that man with his beliefs, his metaphysical ideas, and his religious solutions conditions all the subordinate researches of science as much as he is conditioned by them."

Blondel agrees with Aristotle, saying: "If we must not philosophize, very well, we cannot avoid philosophizing about that." Absolute skepticism is impossible, both theoretically and practically. The only suspension of judgment that Blondel grants is methodological and provisional. Each science opens a perspective which needs to be controlled by the other sciences; and all the sciences together are abstractions which need to be controlled by practical living and vice versa. There is "an alternating rhythm of life and reflection, of action and thought, which enlighten, determine and prove one another mutually."

The historian who pretends to be self-sufficient in his discipline is a usurper. To limit oneself to the phenomena is really to consider that the phenomena exhaust reality. For Blondel, there is an abyss between science and life, between "technical and critical history," on the one hand, which is a science resulting from a phenomenological method, and on the other hand, "real history," which is life, the totality of historical truths, tending to represent genuine reality. As a bridge over this abyss, Blondel wants to propose his own method of immanence.

Historicism, for Blondel, means the substitution of "scientific history" for "real history," or at least a perpetual oscillation from one to the other, until metaphysical and theological affirmations, set aside for the sake of methodological critique, are eventually eliminated. At this point, Blondel gives an illustration taken from the field of optics: "a person suffering from strabism ends by totally eliminating the vision of the weaker eye from his field of consciousness to the advantage of the stronger."

Historicism is the hybrid product, the juxtaposition of two philosophies, the scholastic and the critical, an amalgam of an older conception of science with a newer, with the end result that positive history comes to tolerate only a negative theology. According to the older conception of science, history gives us "a slice of real life and of absolute truth"; according to the newer conception, history unravels the determinism of observable manifestations. Mix the two together and you get the determinism of phenomena given as absolute truth. Historical positivism, conceived as "_the_ way of attaining the reality of history," deals only with testimonies and facts linked together by natural determinism and concludes to the equivalence of historical facts with reality itself: "an ontology, purely phenomenological in character, will be extracted from a methodology and a phenomenology." This scientific determinism can only result in a dialectical evolutionism.

These ambiguities are responsible for the following philosophical theses: (1) Historicism equates "historical" phenomena with reality itself, or as a substitute for it, or at least as the measure of what can be scientifically known and discounts any "extra-historical" source of information. This tendency is disastrous, writes Blondel, in determining the relation between the historical Christ and the real Christ. (2) Historicism tends to "substitute the fact for the actor, the testimony for the witness, the portrait for the person." This attitude confuses the historical Christ with the testimony of his first witnesses. (3) Historicism registers the effects of phenomena expressed, perceived or imagined as if these effects exhausted the initial operation of real beings, the initiative of actors and spectators. By such a confusion, it is hard to understand the relation between the Gospel and the Church. (4) Historicism gives a mechanical explanation for the evolution of events under the pressure of external forces. Consequently, it reveals a logical development, yet without attaining to "an antecedent, concomitant and final cause, of which the whole series is simply THE organic development." Thus, it cannot explain satisfactorily the "relation between Revelation and Tradition, the relations between the various 'moments' of the Church, and the notion of the Christian supernatural itself."

In sum, historicism is limited to a natural phenomenology with the exclusion of metaphysics and supernatural theology; it excludes faith in favor of positive science. After a criticism of the philosophical lacunae of historicism, which is a reaction to those of extrinsicism, Blondel wants to consider its shortcomings in the field of apologetics, its incapacity of passing from facts to faith. Many of those who reject the conclusions of historicism yet accept its methodology. Such an attitude is illogical, for the conclusions of historicism are implied in its principles. Blondel ended at this point the first article on History and Dogma.

CHAPTER VI

PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION OF HISTORY AND DOGMA

PART TWO

On January 4, 1904, Blondel wrote to Mourret: "Je rédige le second article, mais toujours avec douleurs d'enfantement" (CCM, 183). And on the fourteenth: "Je suis dans les affres, ne me dépêtrant pas de l'immense charnier de mes notes pour le second article" (BV, 124).

On January 16, Hügel deplored that, after Loisy, Laberthonnière might be the next victim of the Congregation of the Index. He feared also that Pius X and his advisor, Cardinal Merry del Val, might impose twenty to twenty-five years of "guillotine spirituelle." According to Hügel, the Pope is only the spokesman and the authentic proclaimer of the collective and united Christian consciousness. When one refuses to listen and learn, one ceases to know how to teach and penetrate souls. Apparently, the Pope and the cardinal have no ears for modern scholarship: "Assistance, oui; inspiration, non; et voici que l'on se traite de plus en plus en inspirés en matière de travail humain" (LAB, 145).

On January 18, Giovanni Ferrarre, who was about to make an Italian translation of Laberthonnière's book, Essais de philosophie religieuse, informs the latter that the Civilta Cattolica, a Jesuit periodical, was describing Laberthonnière and Blondel as some of the most dangerous innovators, responsible for a new species of Kantian philosophy in France (LAB, 3).

On January 20, Mourret told Blondel of his satisfaction with the first article, even though he still finds too strong the criticism of extrinsicism. After opening his manual of cardinal Mazzella's De religione et Ecclesia praelectiones scholastico-dogmaticae, he tells Blondel: "C'est dans ce livre, je crois, que vous pourrez trouver la meilleure justification de vos critiques ... Votre article me parait n'avoir nullement l'air d'une démarche pour vous désolidariser. Je ne crois pas qu'il puisse justifier de quelque manière l'appréhension exprimée par vos amis de Fribourg" (CCM, 182). These friends of Blondel were also friends of Loisy. The impression of Mourret was that Blondel had criticized the position of the Jesuit cardinal currently taught in seminaries and had not dissociated himself sufficiently from Loisy.

On January 22, Blondel sent to Mourret the manuscript of his second article with the following comment: "Vous me direz si j'ai réussi à conjurer les craintes que vous m'exprimiez, et si vous maintenez votre reproche à l'égard de ma sévérité pour l'extrinsécisme mazellien" (CCM, 183). Mourret answered on the twenty-fourth. Since Loisy did not satisfy the demands of absolute and unconditional submission to Rome, "on pense à l'archevêché de Paris qu'une excommunication pourrait s'en suivre." "Cette attitude de l'abbé Loisy, writes again Mourret to Blondel, montre que vous avez bien raison de voir le défaut de ses doctrines dans sa méthode,--dans une fausse manière de comprendre l'indépendance de la critique et de l'histoire" (CCM, 183).

On January 23, on a request of cardinal Merry del Val, cardinal Richard informed Loisy that Pius X was not satisfied with the scholar's conditional submission. Cardinal Richard requested furthermore that Loisy abandon all teaching and publications, and retire in a religious house, "où l'excellence du milieu pourrait me refaire une mentalité catholique" (see AL, 121). In his reply to cardinal Merry del Val, on January 26, Lousy wrote:

> Je regrette vivement que le Saint-Père n'ait point jugé suffisante l'adhésion que j'ai donnée aux décrets des Sacrées Congrégations du Saint-Office et de l'Index. J'aurais manqué aux devoirs de la sincérité si je n'avais expressément réservé mes opinions d'historien et d'exégète critique. Il ne m'était pas venu en pensée que l'on pourrait me demander la rétractation pure et simple de tout un ensemble d'idées qui, formant la substance de mes

> ouvrages, touchent à plusieurs ordres de connaissances sur lesquels le magistère ecclésiastique ne s'exerce pas directement (AL, 121-122).

Loisy declares that he believes all the dogmas of the Church, which does not mean to say that he raises no question concerning the intellectual formulations of these dogmas. Nevertheless, he is ready to condemn in his own books anything that would be reprehensible from the viewpoint of faith.

On January 22, Laberthonnière gave to Blondel his impressions on the first article of History and Dogma: "Il m'a semblé ... que la première partie sur l'extrinsécisme était un peu écourtée ou pas tout à fait au point, malgré la netteté et l'ampleur de la vue générale. Mais la position que vous arrivez à prendre ensuite est très forte et très bien éclairée. J'attends la suite avec impatience" (MMd, 41). Laberthonnière would have preferred a much more radical refutation of extrinsicism. He then informs Blondel that he has finished his book on Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec, and is now adding a long appendix. Apparently, the Holy Office will promulgate its decree against Loisy with the indication of the condemned propositions. There is a rumor that Laberthonnière will also be condemned. According to some Roman information gathered by Hügel, the Jesuits were planning to sacrifice a few scholars in order to solve the religious crisis in the Church (MMd, 41).

The following day, Blondel answered Laberthonnière: "Je comprends l'impression que vous a causée la critique de l'extrinsécisme. J'ai rédigé cela avec l'angoisse d'étouffement qu'on éprouve en rampant dans un passage trop étroit. Il y aurait tant à dire! Mais ce n'était qu'un repoussoir--et une preuve que je ne voulais pas me faire Batiffoliste. S'il vous survient des objections, si vous recueillez des échos, faites m'en part, afin que j'en profite pour le troisième et dernier article" (LAB, 133). Were it not for the fearful opposition of Mourret and Wehrlé, Blondel would have been more severe against extrinsicism. He mentions then Loisy's gratitude for his expression of sympathy when five of the exegete's books were placed on the Index.

On January 28, Mourret communicated to Blondel a few Roman reactions to his first article: Zeiller, a friend of Loisy, is satisfied; so is cardinal Mathieu; but Duchesne is very displeased (CCM, 182).

History and Dogma, Part Two

On February 1, 1904, the second article of History and Dogma was published in La Quinzaine. After a criticism of the philosophical lacunae of historicism, Blondel proceeds to its "historical and apologetic structure." Will the perfect description of "Christian facts be sufficient, by itself, to justify Christian beliefs?" Again, we see Blondel's ambiguous expression, "Christian facts," in contrast to "Christian beliefs." The truth of Christianity cannot be found in any isolated notion, thesis, or science, according to Blondel, "but in a view and appreciation of the whole, in the concrete realities, in the person of Christ and the Church which prolongs it." The question is not purely speculative, but it aims "to rediscover the real Christ and to consider the gospel and the Church, its dogmas and sacraments, as things living a continuous life."

The critical historian, according to Blondel, should be less concerned with abstract intellectual formulations than with the concrete realities of which he wants to furnish a vivid impression. If he is concerned with apologetics, he should not limit himself to what happened twenty centuries ago, but with "the real and actual conditions of adhering to a real and actual Christianity." While the scientific endeavor proceeds as "an analysis between two syntheses," between a "first, divinatory, hypothetical synthesis," which raises the question, and a "final synthesis," Blondel adds that metaphysical questions are "antecedent, concomitant, and subsequent to any positive research concerning man." Consequently, scientific history presupposes certain philosophical principles, proceeds according to them, and finally must leave room for a solution ulterior to its own positive results. Blondel wants to make sure that the historian does not neglect any steps. Pursuing his critique of historicism, he plans now to examine (A) three or four instances in which the methodology of historicism falls short; and (B) make a major criticism of this "apologetics through history alone." It is necessary at this point to observe that Loisy planned to develop such an apologetics through history alone in his earlier writings, but that he soon gave up that "folie de jeunesse." Consequently, he should not be taxed with the extreme of historicism, even though recent scholars still perpetuate that myth (see CCM and BV among others).

(A) The relation of Christ and the Catholic Church for a non-believer can be explained only through natural causes and influences. Faced with the success of the Crucified, the historian cannot avoid asking the question: "What did he intend, what did he do, what is he in himself, and how are his initial design and the tremendous consequences of Christianity related?" At this point, Blondel sees two possible answers dependent on a choice between two alternatives. Do we attain the "real Christ" exclusively through the "historic Christ," as portrayed by his first witnesses and historical positivism? If so, "it is the critic, the exegete, the philosopher who hold the keys of theology." Or do we attain the "real Christ" by a compilation of what all the Christians have believed of their Lord: "can we, in order to attain to the real Christ, profit from the total effort of generations of believers, and, as it were, force back to their source all the currents of life and thought which have since been directed upon the Gospels?" In other words, Blondel is not so much concerned with the historical conditions of Jesus Christ living on earth, as with the meaning of the eternal Christ reigning in heaven. In truth, he is not so much concerned with history, as he is with dogma. It is not surprising then if he considers the historical documents of the New Testament as "expressive but necessarily rudimentary" and prefers to look elsewhere, "beyond the texts and beyond the testimony intellectualized by literary expression, for complementary sources and more authentic information." At least, if Blondel had proposed the historical investigation of what each successive generations of Christians have believed of Christ, he would have been able to know better what Christianity as a whole has conceived of the "real Christ." But the solution he proposed for the historical knowledge of primitive Christianity stems from his Catholic faith, not from an adequate understanding of historical science. Since historical testimonies are insufficient to discover the "real Christ," Blondel calls upon some extra-historical sources of information to transmit the "whole secret" of the "real Christ" to successive generations. This brings us back to the two-source theory of revelation, popular in the Roman Catholic church, between Trent and Vatican II.

The dilemma imagined by Blondel is between a Christian reading and a purely naturalistic reading of history. Does Christianity stem only from what Christ did twenty centuries ago, from what he contributed to the determinism of history, or does it stem also "from what He was and still is, from what He willed and foresaw, from what He still does as well as from what He taught?" In the first alternative, the historian shrugs his shoulders in the presence of devotion, myths, and symbols. In the second alternative, the historian is confronted with the Christological problem: "the question about the Saviour, His consciousness, His knowledge, and His real power, is the soul of faith." In other words, is it possible to understand the real Christ by history alone without faith in His resurrection and in His divinity?

For Blondel, the synoptic gospels provide us only with a very inadequate portrait of Jesus. By means of the Synoptics, we penetrate into the mind of Jesus "through the consciousness of His consciousness on the part of simple men deeply involved in the prejudices of their restricted background." Blondel does not believe that "if Christ had been fully conscious of His divinity and possessed a clear vision of the future, He would have uttered, like a man of genius who struggles to convey the whole secret of His soul, more decisive words, echoes of which would be audible in the gospels." Just as "knowledge is not poured ready-made into minds like words into ears," so "the mystery of God could not be violated even by revelation itself." Divinely inspired truth "cannot commune with human thought except by becoming incarnate in the contingent forms which make it, little by little, assimilable." Scriptural revelation, according to Blondel, is simply the first expression of divine truth which needs several generations to be increasingly assimilated and understood.

Blondel asks a further question: "Did the early Church attach itself to the real Christ or the historic Christ?" Such a question is very ambiguous, with respect to the early Church, the real Christ, and the historic Christ. Blondel refuses to leave this question open. Just as "any man creates an atmosphere of which even the most faithful witnesses cannot perpetuate the equivalent," so "the personal and unexpressed influence of the Saviour inaugurated a tradition of devotion and adoration which Christian literature neither exhausts nor fully represents, even when closest to its sources." The christological problem cannot be solved by history alone, which would exclude "a *fortiori* the question of the properly supernatural mode of His mysterious person." If one limits himself to historical science, "although one might continue to say that Christianity is founded *on* Christ as a cathedral is built on a geological foundation, one can no longer add that it was explicitly founded *by* Christ, because one no longer looks behind the historical facts for a substantial and active reality." Unless it is completed by metaphysics and theology, history alone cannot solve the Christological problem. Blondel fears even the provisional suspension of this problem: "one cannot behave even provisionally as though Christianity were founded upon testimonies and texts, on mere literary relics, on a portrait; for there may be, and indeed there certainly are, other strands linking us to Christ, another history formed of living relics, without which Christianity would be a religion of parchments and scribes, and in fact would not exist."

For the sake of argumentation, Blondel will grant "that enthusiasm for the Good News suffices to explain the first faith in the message of Easter." A new problem arises. "If it is true that the apostolic generation lived in the desire and the certitudes of the proximate return of Jesus, ... how did faith survive so immense a disillusionment? How was it purified, fortified, and propagated with such rapidity?" Again, the historian is faced with another dilemma: either a substitution of the object of faith and hope, or the preservation of the same faith and hope, at first implicitly known and then later explicitly understood. The first alternative would involve a substitution of feelings, a reorientation of hopes. According to Loisy, Jesus preached the Parousia, and it was the Church that came. In that case, there would have been a felix error, "an error more true than the truth, since it allows the promotion of the same ideal of justice with the bait of the same ideal of happiness." But Blondel prefers the second alternative: "the expectation of the Parousia was no more than a first imaginative synthesis indicating the point of insertion in the earth-bound minds of the witnesses of Christ." It was also "the providential way of infecting simple souls with the impulse, the enthusiasm, the absolute detachment, the inebriation of martyrdom." It was, like the liturgy teaches us, a reminder that "the world is always on the point of ending for each one of us." Since the second generation of Christians was not utterly disturbed by the postponement of the Parousia, there must have been in the Good Tidings "something else than the expectation of an

Eldorado." According to Blondel, there was much more in the Gospel than the prophecy concerning the Parousia; "always and essentially it contained a doctrine of sin and justification, a summons to penitence, to a spiritual life, to a faith consisting in an attachment to the very person of the Saviour, a need for moral purity and an impulse towards perfect happiness. And if the expectation of Christ's glorious coming never flagged, perhaps it was because He was loved more than His glory, and because He was more truly present in the persecuted Church than if He had come suddenly on the clouds."

To make the reaction of the first generation of Christians, and not the real Christ himself, the origin of Christian faith, as historicism tends to do, would be to avow that "the source of everything specifically Christian had been lost in a great movement of the human conscience, and to assume that to safeguard its confidence in Christ the Church had little by little substituted a different person." The modern Christians would then worship a "restored" image of Christ, not what Christ was, said, thought, and did. The whole problem, according to Blondel, hinges on a choice between two alternatives: either to attribute the origin of Christian development to "a definite intention, a supernatural action, a providential design," to grant "that the voice which preached the Kingdom of God inserted a punctum movens into the determinism of history, a word whose repercussion was so carefully calculated that the echoes of it endures under a thousand harmonising forms," to refer to "an antecedent finality and a unity of design in the historical plan; or else, to limit oneself to the natural determinism of history, to see the Church as "simply one chronological sequence among a host of others." From such passages, it could be argued that in his critique of historicism, Blondel slipped unconsciously in the opposite extreme position of extrinsicism, by taking dogmatic principles as the norms to determine what is and what is not historical.

Without the hypothesis of a definite supernatural action at the origin of Christianity, Blondel cannot understand how the Church could have won over, not only the humble and slaves, but also the intellectuals of twenty centuries, "the whole Roman and Hellenic civilization, the philosophical and religious culture of the East and the West." This is an extremely serious problem for Blondel: his whole philosophical system hinges on its solution. Without the hypothesis of the supernatural, "how would the Good Tidings of salvation become a metaphysic of the Incarnation and the Redemption, the recapitulation of the universe in Christ?"[1] Blondel quotes St. Paul: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. 15:14). In order to reconcile faith and reason, the supernatural with the natural, Blondel began with the hypothesis of the supernatural. Then, with the use of the method of immanence, he unravelled a complete phenomenology to describe the necessity and the conditions for the realization of the supernatural. Integral human action, not speculation alone, can verify that presence. The action of faith can verify the reality of the supernatural, while philosophy can only speculate on its notion.

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[1] This point has been the object of a doctoral thesis in theology at the Gregorian University in Rome; see C.

Concerning dogma, Blondel knows only two irreconcilable hypotheses; either "dogma is simply the adaptation of Christian facts and feelings to the eternal themes of philosophical thought," and doctrinal definitions are as mutable as the systems and climates of human thought; or else, "dogma must be regarded as the concrete solution, as the incarnation in history of the ideal demands and the supreme desiderata of philosophy," and dogmatic formulations as having "within them a factual reality to which their own progress is subordinated." In the first alternative, "the facts exist for the sake of the ideas"; in the second, "the ideas exist for

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Troisfontaines, "Le Christ 'lien substantiel' dans les premiers écrits de Maurice Blondel." (Unpublished thesis. Rome: Gregorianum, 1965).

the sake of the facts." In the first case, one would regard "the theories of St. Paul or St. John on the redemptive death of Christ, and on the incarnation of the Word of God" as only the "artificial and provisional scaffoldings of the spiritual edifice." In the second case, since the whole development of Christianity was precontained in the acts and sufferings of the Saviour, one would say that progress in Christian sciences is simply a "rediscovery" of a substantial and antecedent reality.

As a philosopher, Blondel prefers the first alternative: "I can easily see why the critic, the historian or the philosopher, leans towards the first thesis." As a Roman Catholic believer, however, he must accept the second thesis. How can he then be reconciled with himself? "The philosophic proof of an impossibility is the most difficult of all." The historian cannot invoke the impossibility of supernatural facts at the origin of Christianity; hence, it would be more scientific not to exclude, but to consider seriously the hypothesis of the supernatural at the point of departure and to witness in the course of investigation how much light this hypothesis can shed upon Christian development. Besides its more satisfactory advantage for faith, Blondel believes he can find a rational justification for the second thesis. He finds an amazing coincidence between the various understandings of John and Paul, of the Fathers of the Church, of the theologians and of modern man, "so that dogmas, the history of Christ, and the life of man form a sort of indivisible whole: mihi vivere Christus est." All the philosophical schools, the moral doctrines, and the religious sects cannot explain such a coincidence. "The historical anomaly remains rationally unaccountable even though we space out the discoveries in time, postpone the dates of uncertain texts, attribute certain documents to this or that author, overlook the anticipations and assume tendencious interpolations so as to make the cumulative effect more probable by first spacing them out and then linking them up together." What Blondel rejects here are the conclusions advanced by the critical study of the Bible in favor of a dogmatic approach. In a footnote, he quotes a long passage from Duchesne who concludes to the supernatural character of the Church, not from any evidence taken separately, but from the convergence of innumerable probabilities. This was also Newman's opinion, in his Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine: "A collection of weak evidences make up a strong evidence."[1]

According to Newman, "Revelation is all in all in doctrine; the Apostles its sole depository, the inferential method its sole instrument, and ecclesiastical authority its sole sanction."[1] In the Grammar of Assent, Newman explains what he means by his theory of inference and the illative sense. In this study, the psychological workings of faith replace the Aristotelian logic of reason. Newman distinguishes between the notional assent which is given to dogmatic propositions, and the real assent which is given to the mystery revealed. Newman's anti-intellectualism and intuitive fideism underly his phenomenological study of the believer. He prefers a vast intuitive presumption to a controlled inductive reasoning. His theory of natural inference is derived from his psychology of faith. Its instrument, the illative sense, is an extralogical power; it "is the capacity for entering with instinctive correctness into principles, doctrines, and facts, whether they be true or false, and of discovering promptly what conclusion from them is necessary, suitable, and expedient, if they are taken for granted.[2] Newman compares the illative sense to the phronesis of Aristotle's Nichomachian Ethics.

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[1] (New York: Image Books, 1960), p. 122.

According to Aristotle, phronesis, that is practical wisdom, is neither a science involving demonstration from invariable principles, nor an art expressing a capacity to make something, but a true and reasoned capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man. The prudent man is he who deliberates well "about what is good and expedient for himself ... about what sort of things conduce to the good life in general."[1] Aristotle does not identify moral virtue with knowledge as Plato does, nor does he hold that the ultimate principles of action are invariable as Aquinas holds. Aristotle taught prudential and utilitarian ethics. Far from being a scientific tool for the verification of history, Newman's illative sense can be regarded by the critic as a pragmatic rationalization for his decision of faith. In the same way, Blondel could be said to be less concerned with an historical understanding of Christianity than with a pragmatic rationalization for his dogmatic beliefs.

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[1] The Idea of a University (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1955), pp. 169-170.

[2] Grammar of Assent, p. 282.

(B) Blondel now comes to the major criticism of "apologetics through history alone." Faced with the fact of the Catholic Church, the apologist-historian will say: "In spite of all the reasons for its failure, the Catholic Church has survived for centuries; no demonstrable breach between its past and its present has occurred; and that factual continuity must be understood as a logical development, as an equilibrium which, though unstable, is invariably recaptured, as the progressive adaptation of Christian society to the mounting flux of humanity." From a purely historical description of this succession of facts, Blondel wonders what act of faith will arise. He finds much ambiguity in the meaning of the word "fact," used by the apologist-historian. Blondel can find at least three meanings.

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[1] Nichomachean Ethics, in Introduction to Aristotle (New York: The Modern Library, 1947), p. 428.

(1) A fact can mean "the chronological succession and the real continuity of the Christian past and present." For Blondel, this first meaning is "a truism from which we can deduct nothing"; there is nothing particular here to distinguish either the Christian religion from the other world religions, or the Roman Catholic confession from any other Christian denomination.

(2) A fact can mean "the intelligible continuity which links together the successive movements in the life of the Church in the eyes of sciences, just as they are united in the real history of ideas and events." For Blondel, to establish this logical succession requires an "historical construction," and this construction in turn presupposes an analysis on the basis of a partially hypothetical synthesis, which cannot by itself account for the spiritual continuity.

(3) A fact can mean "the spiritual unity and the organic continuity of a single thought, of a single life, making the

Church a single immortal being." To establish this is not easy. It means "to introduce a controlling idea into the heart of facts, which is itself not a fact, and it alone could serve as a criterion to distinguish what was only evolution, which is to say the effect of external pressures or of interdependent influences, from what is vital development, that is to say continuous creation starting from a germ which transsubstantiates its own nourishment." In another passage, Blondel identified this controlling idea with the notion of the supernatural.

It is interesting at this point to compare Blondel's position with that of Newman. In his Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, Newman begins with the hypothesis that the present Roman Catholic church is identical with the Church founded by Christ. He presumes that there is a substantial continuity of doctrine despite the vicissitudes of external change. He assails the Protestants who neglect historical Christianity between the fourth and the sixteenth centuries: "To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant" (p. 35). Certainly there are apparent inconsistencies and alterations in doctrine and worship when one compares the early and the later Church. Newman does not want to deny the fact of historical Christianity as he says that some Protestants do, or assume with the Anglican divines that the pure

Church of the Fathers eventually became corrupt, or admit change while rejecting supernatural revelation as the liberal rationalists do. "The subsequent profession of the doctrine in the Universal Church creates a presumption that it was held even before it was professed; and it is fair to interpret the early Fathers by the later" (p. 41). This passage of the _Essay_, written in 1845 when Newman was becoming a Roman Catholic, contradicts what he wrote earlier in 1837, in his _Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church_.

In this earlier essay, Newman objected to the Roman claim of infallibility on the grounds that it overrides and supersedes historical evidence in favor of innovations in doctrine:

> As we accord to the Protestant sectary that Scripture is the inspired treasury of the whole faith, but maintain that his doctrines are not in Scripture, so we agree with the Romanists in appealing to antiquity as our great teacher, but we deny that his doctrines are in antiquity any more than they are in the Bible; and we maintain that his professed tradition is not really such, that it is a tradition of men, that it is not continuous...that his doctrines are innovations.[1]

Newman's criterion for the interpretation of early Church doctrine was the canon of Vincent of Lerins, "always, everywhere, and by all." According to Newman, cardinal Bellarmine used a dogmatic approach to interpret the Fathers of the

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[1] See E. R. Fairweather, _The Oxford Movement_ (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 121.

Church in order to read in patristic literature later developments of Roman Catholic doctrine:

> He was teaching what they ought to mean, what _in charity_ they must be supposed to mean, what they _might_ mean, as far as the very words went, _probably_ meant, _considering_ the Church so meant, and might be taken to mean, even if their authors did not so mean, from the notion they spoke vaguely, and, as children, that they really meant something else than what they formally said, and that, after all, they were but the spokesmen of the then existing Church, which, though in silence, certainly held as being the Church, that same doctrine which Rome has since defined and published.[1]

When Bellarmine noticed erroneous statements of the Fathers, Newman said that he treated them as individual opinions, the expression of dissenters from the official teaching of the Church whose teaching is changeless.

Once he became a Roman Catholic, Newman adopted the same method for the interpretation of the Fathers which he had previously criticized in Bellarmine. He built his theory for the development of Christian doctrine on the notion that Christianity is one thing, and one thing only. As an idea, "Christian doctrine admits of formal, legitimate, and true development, that is, of developments contemplated by its Divine Author" (_Essay_, p. 93). Lest he be called an intellectual evolutionist, Newman wrote to Acton in 1862: "What is meant by Development? Is it a more intimate apprehension, and a more lucid enunciation of the original dogma? For myself, I think it is, and nothing more ... The words 'development in dogma' are substantially nothing but the process by which, under the magisterium of the Church, implicit faith becomes explicit."[1]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 138.

To control this process from implicit to explicit faith, Newman presupposes an infallible authority. As the notion of preservation is included in the idea of creation, so the necessity of an infallible interpretation is implied in the belief in divine revelation. Newman understands the essence of all religion to be authority and obedience. He distinguishes natural religion from revealed religion, the first being based on conscience as a subjective authority, the latter being based on the supremacy of Apostle, Pope, or Church, as an objective authority. "The absolute need of a spiritual supremacy is at present the strongest of arguments in favour of the fact of its supply" (Essay, p. 106). He feels confident that his hypothesis of explicit development under an infallible authority can account for the development of Roman Catholicism and the formation of its theology.

For Newman, the central idea of Christianity is the

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[1] see H. A. MacDougall, The Acton-Newman Relations: The Dilemma of Christian Liberalism (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962), p. 162.

Incarnation. From this key notion follow the doctrine of mediation, the sacramental principle, the merits of the saints, the Mass and Real presence, the veneration of saints and their relics, purgatory, indulgences, celibacy, and so forth. "You must accept the whole or reject the whole ... before you know where you are, you may be carried away by a stern logical necessity to accept the whole" (Essay, p. 111). Newman explained what he means by this "stern logical necessity" in the Grammar of Assent.

He claimed Butler's Analogy as the source for his theory of development, but added that Butler's meaning differed from his own. In a university sermon, preached on February 2, 1843, Newman declared: "Butler is speaking of the discovery of new truths in passages of Scripture, and the text speaks of a further insight into the primitive and received sense of scripture passages, gained by meditating upon them and bringing out their one idea more completely."[1]

Butler maintained an analogy between the giveness of nature studied by the scientist and the giveness of scriptural revelation examined by the divine. There would be, consequently, a progress in theology analogous to a progress in the natural sciences. For Newman, on the other hand, revelation is to be found in the Bible as it was understood by the ancient Church; religious obedience, not reason alone, becomes the agent of "further insights." Doctrinal definitions of Christian faith rest on infallible authority. In place of Butler's analogy of Christian development with scientific development, Newman conceived his analogy of Christian development with the growth of a seed to a fully mature tree. He used another analogy between the individual Christian's appropriation of his faith and the way according to which the "general mind" of the Church accepted revelation as a whole and only later discerned its structure and the relations between its various elements. The Apostles, according to Newman, knew implicitly all the truths which later Christians know explicitly; doctrinal developments are to be accepted on faith just as in the original revelation.

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[1] See O. Chadwick, From Bossuet to Newman: The Idea of Doctrinal Development (Cambridge University Press, 1957), p.89.

In order to distinguish true development from corruption, Newman set up seven rules and gave historical instances to corroborate each of them:

> There is no corruption if it retains one and the same type, the same principles, the same organization; if its beginnings anticipate its subsequent phases, and its later phenomena protect and subserve its earlier; if it has a power of assimilation and revival, and a vigorous action from first to last (Essay, p. 177).

Newman did not claim that his theory of development was purely historical, but on the basis of his dogmatic faith, he attempted to interpret the phenomena of doctrinal development. In this regard, and in spite of significant differences, there is a great similarity between Bellarmine, Newman, and Blondel.

As we return to Blondel's critique of historicism, we see that for him empirical observations and historical constructions are limited to natural facts. While the historicist places himself within the fieri of events and disregards the esse, the extrinsicist claims that he is concerned with the esse and neglects the fieri. Blondel utilizes this Kantian distinction between the phenomena and the noumena. These are easy dichotomies, clear-cut, but far removed from reality. Blondel was aware of his exaggerations when he wrote that he was using "barbarous neologisms with a view to fixing attention and throwing into relief the exclusive character of each thesis" (HD, 225).

If the apologist presents the fact of the Catholic Church in all its ambiquity, Blondel sees two possible meanings: (1) either the totality of this astonishing spectacle is supposed to produce faith as a universal miracle; or else (2) a divine character is attributed to the origin of the Christian movement; consequently, "everything that comes from that source, however distant or indirect the channels, is also divine." Blondel wants to examine these two interpretations.

Since historicism is limited to a phenomenological approach, it cannot discover the reality of the supernatural in history. It would either evacuate the supernatural from history, or make "a complete abdication of criticism in the face of faith." Historicism, no less than extrinsicism, cannot overcome the dual threat of rationalism and fideism.

In the first instance, can the totality of ecclesiastical history suffice, by itself, to produce faith? Can the Church simply say: "Look and judge; there is no need for me to play the part of an apologist when history does so?" Some historicists have made a global affirmation of the presence of the divine in the universal history of the Church. Blondel, however, rejects this claim: "The transition from facts to faith cannot be accomplished in this way." In rejecting this claim of historicism, Blondel was not heeding the statement of Vatican I which claimed the history of the Church to be the fullest proof of its supernatural character. In the mind of Blondel, the historicist's claim is contradictory. Since historicism, that is, "apologetics through history alone," limits itself to a phenomenological description, it either excludes anything refractory to natural explanations, or it establishes such a logical continuity that everything seems natural and there is no more room for the intervention of the supernatural. "Thus, having eliminated the real, the metaphysical and the supernatural in every detail, there will be no need to look for it in the whole, since they are only hypotheses which can easily be dispensed with."

Even though he does not name Loisy at this point, Blondel implies that this is the position of the critical biblical scholar. If it is claimed that the Church is simply the Gospel continued, the approach of the historian-apologist who methodically disregards the supernatural "becomes subversive of all Christianity which is properly supernatural and of any positively divine revelation."

In the second instance, "historical apologetics" is limited to the verification of the "link which unites the present forms of Catholic life to its original source." But again, "if all the natural explanations have been made to converge" upon that source, how will it ever appear divine, and how will the rest of Church history appear as divine?

Consequently, history, by itself, cannot become *ipso facto* an apology for the supernatural character of Christianity: "If the historian who limits himself to it is a believer, then it is without its support and in some respects in spite of it." At this point, Blondel is frightened at the thought that he might have identified Loisy in the minds of certain of his readers. He hastily indicates in a footnote: "I disclaim any personal applications that readers may be tempted to make of my words. I am studying abstract theses in their schematic form: at each bifurcation which I have indicated there are, in fact, cross-currents; and one can say that most exegetes mingle what I am trying to analyse and oppose as interlocked and incompatible theses. Any specific allusion would be a calumny." He quotes from the copy of his letter to Loisy of March 7, 1903, in which he praised the exegete for the first ninety-six pages of Etudes bibliques. These pages were not included in the commercial edition; but Blondel had received a private copy. In his letter, Blondel wrote:

> Et vous marquez fortement, page 34, les réserves que je vous avais timidement proposées: 'La question christologique, comme celle de la vérité générale de la révélation biblique, ne se posera pas seulement devant l'intelligence du critique, mais devant la conscience de l'homme, et ce n'est pas uniquement par le témoignage de l'histoire qu'elle pourra être résolue (CCM, 107).

Blondel now adds in his footnote in History and Dogma: "All that we provisionally ask, like him, is that 'the mystery of the consciousness of Christ should be respected by the historian'; for 'the texts do not allow of a psychological analysis of the notion of the Son of Man.'" In that same letter just mentioned, Blondel opposed his own faith to Loisy's faith: "Permettez que ma foi d'homme proteste contre ce que j'ai cru deviner (sans doute à tort) de votre foi d'homme" (CCM, 107). He wants to prevent the historian from making assertions contrary to faith: "Je ne vous demande pas de tenir compte, en historien, de l'histoire de l'Enfance et de la Mariologie. Je vous demande seulement de ne pas rendre impossibles des vérités que peuvent avoir été des faits; que la conception virginale ne relève pas de l'histoire [as Loisy apparently wrote in Etudes bibliques, p.39], soit; mais cela peut tout de même avoir été de l'histoire. Et je demeure persuadé que la foi l'exige" (CCM, 107). Blondel declares that he is criticizing "the thesis of the water-tight compartment between history and dogma." Unfortunately many readers forgot the remark of Blondel--"any specific allusion would be a calumny"--and pin-pointed Loisy as the culprit of historicism.

When Loisy became a persona non grata in Roman Catholic theological circles, without losing his reputation among critical historians and biblical exegetes, he limited himself strictly to history in his "petits livres", just as Harnack had done. In L'Evangile et L'Eglise, Loisy wrote: "On n'entend pas démontrer ici la vérité de l'Evangile ni celle du Christianisme catholique, mais on essaie seulement d'analyser et de définir le rapport qui les unit dans l'histoire. Le lecteur de bonne foi ne s'y trompera pas" (EE, vii).

Archbishop Mignot did not misunderstand Loisy. The latter wrote: "Et comme vous étiez un lecteur de bonne foi, Monseigneur, vous ne cherchiez pas dans mon livre autre chose que ce que j'y avais voulu mettre. Vous saviez qu'un livre d'histoire n'est pas un livre de théologie" (APL, 109-110). Not every reader of Loisy has been "un lecteur de bonne foi." Not everyone has respected the distinction he made between history and theology for practical reasons. Instead of that, it was easier to accuse him of separating and excluding theology from history.

According to Blondel, since the historicist excludes the supernatural from his science, he can rely only on his faith to discover it: "In that case his faith will be entirely divorced from his science." The consequences of such an attitude leads to say "that many gospel facts have no acceptable meaning except for those who already believe." Blondel has forgotten for the moment that he wrote earlier: "Miracles are truly miraculous only for those who are already prepared to recognize the divine action in the most usual events" (L, 135). Consequently, historical science cannot by itself and alone become an apologetics for Christian beliefs.

Once he has revealed "the inadequacy of old attitudes and the failure of old arguments," that is, once he has shown the failure of the scholastic principles at the root of both extrinsicism and historicism, Blondel formulates the problem which has occupied him all his life: "A faith without reason is as unjust to reason as it is dangerous to faith." A purely extrinsic concordance of faith with science was the attitude of both extrinsicists and historicists. Blondel's efforts were aimed at the discovery of the perfect synthesis which would relate facts and faith, history and dogma. Extrinsicism was primarily concerned with ideas; historicism, primarily concerned with facts. Since neither the faith of the extrinsicist was linked to the facts, nor the faith of the historicist linked to ideas, their faith was endangered: "Like a kite without a string to secure it to the facts and without the compensating weight of ideas, it is in perpetual danger of finding itself suspended between heaven and earth, either dissolving into a mystical symbolism or falling back into scientific positivism."

Blondel knew that certain apologists, tempted by historicism, had good intentions; and yet, the very sincerity of their faith beguiled them into a trap. Apparently, the historicist would define Christian faith in the following manner:

> What I call miraculous and divine is the marvelous repercussion of an initially almost imperceptible impulse, the infinitely amplified echo of an occurrence which, were it to happen today in Tibet or Turkestan, would probably escape our information

> services, the drama of Calvary which has produced among men such deep faith; for, in awakening the profoundest harmonies of the soul, Christ showed the goal of mankind's religious aspirations; and humanity, by proclaiming the divinity of Christ, has realized the best of truths: it is a permanent acquisition, and the curve traced by successive generations of Christians will develop to infinity the impulse springing from the depths of its consciousness.

After searching in vain for the historicist from whom Blondel would have quoted the preceding passage, I found in the preparatory notes for History and Dogma the rough draft of this fictitious definition composed by Blondel himself. Such a definition of Christian faith, writes, Blondel, does not allow for the distinction between the specifically Christian supernatural and the divine; it reduces Christ into an Unknown, and puts "the Unknowable Unconscious in place of the Heavenly Father."

It will be useful at this point to recall a few passages from the previous correspondence between Blondel and Loisy. When Wehrlé was told by Guibert on January 28, 1903, that Loisy had presumably abandoned his Catholic faith, he wrote immediately to Loisy, and said with a reference to L'Evangile et L'Eglise: "Si c'est vraiment votre christologie que nous donnen les chapîtres du Royaume des cieux et du Fils de Dieu, je la crois erronée et incompatible avec les données théologiques les plus fermes, les plus constantes, les plus immuables de l'Eglise" (CCM, 71). In response, Loisy wrote on February 2: "Vous êtes infiniment mieux renseigné que moi sur ma 'christologie.' Il n'y a dans mes deux premiers chapîtres que ce qui apparait à l'historien. Donc pas de christologie. Ma christologie est celle de l'Eglise; mais j'ajouterai que je crois cette christologie susceptible d'explication" (CCM, 72). In a passage of the same letter which remains unpublished, Loisy added:

> Il me semble que vous confondez la notion scolastique de la personnalité avec la notion moderne et psychologique de la personne. Vous affirmez l'unité, et, j'en ai bien peur, la confusion, de la conscience humaine et de la conscience divine par rapport à Jésus. La christologie admet deux sciences et deux volontés distinctes; au point de vue de la philosophie moderne, cela ferait deux consciences. Vous vous prononcez hardiment sur le rapport de l'une à l'autre, comme si l'Eglise avait déjà examiné ce rapport, comme si les anciens Conciles avaient en vue la psychologie du Christ et non un rapport métaphysique avec Dieu. Il y a là un problème à étudier: c'est la seule opinion ferme que j'aie sur le sujet (Quoted in CL,139).

In his letter of February 6, addressed to Wehrlé, but meant to be sent to Loisy, Blondel wrote: "Je répète que la distinction de la personnalité métaphysique et de la personne psychologique est une de ces logomachies que Bergson, après d'autres, vient une fois de plus de réduire en poussière." Such distinctions are but mental abstractions for Blondel. For him, to deny the divine consciousness of Jesus means to deny the divinity of Christ. And he adds: "Mais pourtant, dira-t-on, comment maintenir la dualité de science, la dualité de volonté, le caractère humain dans le Christ ... Mais dire, comme on vous l'écrit, que deux sciences feraient, au sens moderne, deux personnes, c'est là une scolastique digne de M. Gayraud; comme si nous n'avions pas la science sensible de vérités géométriques dont nous pouvons avoir aussi la science rationnelle" (see CCM, 78-79: text corrected by the original).

From the foregoing discussion we can see that Blondel, out of charity and respect for a scholar he admired, abstained from launching a personal attack on Loisy. But he failed to make the proper distinctions which could have prevented the uninformed readers from pointing their fingers to a scholar already condemned by Rome. In this fashion he was able to dissociate himself from Loisy and to side with the conservative party.

CHAPTER VII

PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION OF HISTORY AND DOGMA

PART THREE

On February 3, 1904, Blondel informed Laberthonnière that he has just finished the composition of his third article for History and Dogma. He invites the latter to send his objections, his criticisms, and his doubts. It was with great hesitation, he says, that he intervened in this crisis, at the risk of displeasing friends as well as enemies. He felt compelled to obey his spiritual director and his conscience. There was also the intention of refuting some articles in the Bulletin of Toulouse and L'Ami du clergé in which his own philosophy was made responsible for the exegesis of Loisy (LAB, 133).

On the same day, Laberthonnière expressed to Blondel his admiration after reading the second article. No one could be more profound and more thoroughly Christian, according to Laberthonnière: "Il me semble que jamais personne n'a donné plus de relief et plus de consistance à la réalité historique du Christ. Vous accusera-t-on encore d'idéalisme? Vous dominez parfaitement le débat" (BL,172). In order to understand the enthusiasm of Laberthonnière, one must remember the close friendship which linked him to Blondel and made him share the incessant calamities afflicting his friend: every member of Blondel's family undergoing sickness, accusations of heresy, threats of condemnation, accusations of being responsible for the errors of condemned men such as Denis and Loisy, contradictory pressures exercised by friend and foe on the timeliness of his publication, and so forth. Amid such turmoils, Laberthonnière could see easily "des éclats de lumière éblouissante" in Blondel's belabored articles, wrung out of a tortured mind (see letter of Blondel to Bremond in CCM, 215).

Even though Laberthonnière praises Blondel's articles as "un chef d'oeuvre de pensée chrétienne," he is convinced that some theologians and critics will misunderstand them. He suggests the revision of certain expressions in view of the future publication of the three articles in a small volume. He adds some news concerning Loisy and Denis who are both ready to submit to the Roman condemnations:

> L'affaire Loisy, hélas! menace de tourner mal. Comme vous le savez, le Saint-Office n'a pas voulu se risquer à porter un décret condamnant des propositions déterminées et il s'est contenté de faire marcher l'Index. Or, pour accepter la soumission de Loisy, Mgr Merry del Val exige qu'il souscrive purement et simplement à sa lettre au Cardinal Richard. Si bien que Loisy devrait condamner en bloc ce que le Saint-Office n'a pas osé se risquer à condamner en détail. La procédure n'est certainement pas canonique. M. Loisy souffre beaucoup. Il sent

> de l'acharnement contre lui. Il m'a semblé, à causer avec lui, qu'il ne serait pas irréductible. Je l'ai vu il y a huit jours. On me dit qu'il a tout préparé pour recevoir les coups dont on pourra le frapper. S'il en arrive à la résistance ouverte, je crois que cela fera un mal considérable. Et quel triomphe pour les Fontaine et compagnie! Je suis allé dimanche chez l'abbé Denis. Il va annoncer sa soumission dans le prochain numéro des Annales (*MMd*, 41; part of this letter was published in *CCM*, 186, and dated by error on February 4).

On February 4, Wehrlé wrote the following to Blondel:

> Pour l'abbé Loisy, vous savez (1) que le Cardinal Merry del Val a retourné au Cardinal Richard la lettre adressée au Saint-Office, qui n'admet pas les réserves multiples mais demande une soumission pure et simple sous peine de *progredi ad ulteriora*; (2) que le Cardinal Richard, en une heure d'entretien, n'a obtenu aucune concession; (3) que M. Monnier a parlementé à Bellevue sans rien obtenir non plus et qu'on accueille la menace des "au-delà" en levant vers le ciel un regard résigné à tout, (4) qu'on a fait savoir, des Hautes Etudes, que la chaire de Sorbonne serait enlevée, si on se soumettait; (5) que le Cardinal a refusé de confier le document romain, à lui adressé, à l'abbé Loisy, qui le demandait sans doute pour publier une nouvelle brochure explicative; (6) que mardi soir Henri Lorin, l'abbé Vercesi (rédacteur-en-chef de l'*Osservatore cattolico* de Milan), l'abbé Naudet et le jeune Thureau-Dangin ont uni leurs efforts à Bellevue pour obtenir la soumission, sans obtenir ni "oui" ni "non"; mais, du moins, ils ont trouvé un homme abattu et désemparé au lieu du personnage irrité et dédaigneusement hautain rencontré par M. Monnier. Si la soumission ne vient pas *assez vite*, ce sera l'excommunication, certainement. Il faut prier, car c'est un drame tel qu'on n'en pas vu depuis cinquante ans (*CCM*, 185-186).

Again, on February 4, Mourret congratulated Blondel on his second article: "Personne jusqu'ici n'a approfondi le sujet comme vous le faîtes, et avec quel sens chrétien et catholique" (*CCM*, 183). In the same letter, Mourret announces that Cardinal Perraud is also writing a pastoral letter against the doctrines of Loisy (CCM, 190). Finally, he cannot suggest a single correction to improve Blondel's article (BV, 125). Undoubtedly, Mourret was satisfied with the manner according to which his rough draft for the second article had been used by Blondel (CCM, 184: Mourret's notes are to be found in AB).

On the same day, Hügel informed Laberthonnière that there is no reason to believe the rumors concerning the latter's imminent condemnation. Concerning Loisy, however, Hügel is convinced that an unconditional submission would be too radical:

> Il doit être (et il est) prêt à faire (il l'a fait à deux reprises) une soumission sincère et réelle; et si l'autorité finit par prendre des mesures encore plus sévères contre lui, il devra (et, avec l'aide de Dieu il saura) garder une attitude de respect et d'attachement sincèrement catholique. Mail s'il fait ces deux choses-là, je ne vois pas, ni comment il serait sage ou sincère d'en exiger une soumission sans restrictions, en un cas de cette complexité, où il y a bien plus de points de méthode et résultats historico-critiques que de matière proprement doctrinale. Et je ne vois pas non plus pourquoi, s'il fait son possible en ces deux choses-là, ses anciens amis devraient l'abandonner, même si Rome le suspend (LAB, 145).

Hügel mentions an article published in the Pilot in which he expressed his willingness to submit to the Roman decisions, save for the rights of his conscience and his professional opinions as an historian. He deplores the preference given in times past and present by official and ecclesiastical circles to those who make an absolute and insincere submission over those who make a conditional but sincere submission.

Blondel received a deluge of letters from Hügel, Fonsegrive, Giraud, Bremond, Léger, Denis, Grosjean, Bernard, and others, all in favor of Loisy (see BV, 125). Unfortunately, most of these letters have not yet been published and are not easily accessible.

On February 6, Blondel explained to Mourret the mystical experience which supported him in the midst of the anguish and obscurity in which he was working; he felt "l'action du Maître intérieur, dont j'ai eu par instants la très vive impression" (CCM, 184). Blondel thanks Mourret for a great portion of the arguments he developed in his second article: "C'est votre oeuvre; car d'abord vous m'avez mis la plume à la main, et sans vous, sans doute, tout se serait borné à un article de ... M. Mallet ... Vous avez aussi vos droits d'auteur, par l'assistance spirituelle et intellectuelle qui ne m'a pas abandonné un instant" (CCM, 184; I have found at least nine pages of Mourret among Blondel's notes for the second article). Blondel informed Mourret that Loisy objected only to the obscurity of the second article. He fears for his third article, that is, his "paradox on Tradition." In a postscript, he begs Mourret to tell him if it is wise to send a special copy to Loisy.

Mourret answered the next day. Not all the readers of Blondel have found him obscure. In particular, Labauche, a Sulpician theologian, is glad that Blondel wrote his articles, although he regrets that Loisy's method was not adequately presented. This opinion is shared by many ecclesiastics in sympathy with Loisy. Mourret sees a great danger in such a sympathy. Blondel's articles do not appear to him any more equivocal than Loisy's own "petits livres." Apparently, Mignot, Monnier, and a host of friends, both lay and clerical, have tried in vain to persuade Loisy to submit unconditionally to the demands of the Roman curia. Mourret sees no objection if Blondel wants to send a special copy of his articles to Loisy (CCM, 184-186).

On February 17, Birot, who was then the secretary of archbishop Mignot, wrote to Felix Klein: "L'affaire Loisy, c'est l'affaire Dreyfus de l'état-major théologique" (HDC, 21). In other words, in a period of religious crisis, Loisy was chosen as the scapegoat by the integrists and by the reactionary group of the neoscholastics.

Bremond wrote to Blondel, on February 9, that Hügel would like very much to write a brochure in defense of Loisy, a kind of eirenikon; but he finds much opposition to such a project. Hügel is definitely not satisfied with Blondel's articles; he wired a message to Fonsegrive to offer his rebuttal for a subsequent issue of the La Quinzaine. On the same day. Hügel wrote to Blondel: "Rien n'est plus désirable et utile pour nous tous, qu'une discussion menée en ce ton haut et large et digne qui manque en ces matières si souvent et dont vous avez si pleinement la maîtrise" (CCM, 211). In this period of trial, he thought that Blondel would hesitate before writing against Loisy. But he finds Blondel's articles a useful service rendered to Loisy. It was good for Blondel to view Loisy "en homme discutable, avec les égards que tout homme, tout chrétien doit à l'autre" (CCM, 211). Hügel informs Blondel that he plans to respond to his articles within a month or so. Finally, he assures the philosopher of Aix that he knows of no friend of Loisy more faithful than he (CCM, 211-212). A month earlier, Hügel had published an apology for Loisy in the Pilot (see BV, 141).

On February 10, Blondel wrote to Wehrlé: "Je viens de corriger les épreuves du troisième article. Timeo valde et tremisco! Encore ai-je supprimé quelques raideurs superflues; mais j'ai laissé d'autres paroles, sévères et graves. Mais qui donc les dirait? S'il ne faut pas commettre le crime de Cham, il y a un crime contraire à éviter" (BV, 125). Undoubtedly, Blondel does not want to offend too much certain ecclesiastical authorities who are guilty of a campaign of calumny against Loisy. On the other hand, he wants to remind them that they are in danger of losing the breadth of Christian tradition by their insistence on a narrow intellectualism and a servile obedience.

On February 11, Blondel promised Hügel to send him a copy of his study on History and Dogma. He mentions that he wrote these articles in obedience to his conscience:

> Voyant ce que je crois voir, confident de troubles profonds et de défections parmi de jeunes prêtres et des étudiants qui avaient lu les derniers livres de M. Loisy et y avaient perdu la foi au Christ Dieu et à l'Eglise concrète sous sa forme actuelle, j'entendais un reproche intérieur; et malgré les conseils de quelques amis, comme Victor Giraud ou Augustin Léger, malgré le chagrin profond de vous déplaire en quelque chose ou de paraître intervenir au risque d'aggraver une situation si douloureuse pour M. Loisy, la parole de l'Evangile retentissait de plus en plus à mes oreilles: "Que aime ses amis plus que moi n'est pas digne de moi" (CCM, 212).

Blondel explains then the intimate human intentions which inspired him. In order not to supply any ammunition to the adversaries, he waited until after Loisy's condemnation and his submission to publish the first article. He proposed salutary distinctions, pointed to the depth and complexity of the problems, raised the debate from questions of personalities to the level of philosophic discussions, and even affronted the adversaries of Loisy in order to distract their attention:

> Ma tactique a été de mettre chacun des camps adverses en face de deux caricatures qui puissent leur servir de repoussoir, les amener à dire: "On nous a défigurés" et leur permettre finalement de s'expliquer et peut-être de se rapprocher,--fût-ce contre moi (CCM, 213).

Blondel tried to prove that neither independent criticism, nor modern philosophy is responsible for the errors involved. At the same time, he refuted the solidarity which Portalié, Maignen, Bulliot, and others were establishing between the philosopher of L'Action and the biblical exegete: "J'ai tenu à montrer qu'où ils croyaient avoir un adversaire à deux têtes, il y en avait deux absolument distincts et que, dût la Christologie de M. Loisy être dûment condamnée, ce n'est pas leur scholastique qui devrait seule rester triomphante" (CCM, 213). While he does not accept Loisy's christology, Blondel rejects also the neoscholastic system. It was not passively, but willingly that he obeyed his spiritual director, Mourret. He confesses that after his first article, when it was too late to withdraw the second, he was shocked to learn of the "exigences inimaginables qui poursuivent M. Loisy jusque dans l'intimité de son travail privé." When Hügel has read his three articles, Blondel expects him to write a fundamental criticism. Some readers have already objected to Blondel that he rejected the errors of Loisy only to replace them by a still more radical error. He does not compare Hügel, however, to a "féroce chasseur," but to a surgeon. Blondel points out to Hügel that he avoided all personal polemic: "Je considère des thèses 'possibles' ... je vise plus encore ceux qui ont déduit de M. Loisy des conclusions dont il est parfaitement innocent, autant que je le suis de lui ou de M. Hébert à qui j'ai pensé au cours d'une de mes pages" (CCM, 214). Blondel thanks Hügel for his noble, courageous, and vigorous apology of Loisy in the Pilot: "Puisse l'Eglise avoir beaucoup de fils, et M. Loisy avoir beaucoup d'amis comme vous! Puisse l'héroisme de la soumission le mener à la sainteté et préparer mystérieusement la fécondité salutaire de votre oeuvre et de la sienne! (CCM, 214).

On February 12, Blondel answered Bremond who was lodging with Hügel and would very likely read the letter written a day earlier to the baron. He hopes to send offset copies of his three articles between the twentieth and the twenty-fifth of February. He would appreciate Bremond's observations, if the latter would overlook the laborious style of several of his pages: "J'en ai écrit plusieurs dans un tel état de fatigue, de dégoût et de peine que, à la lettre, je ne voyais plus le sens même de ce que je disais" (CCM, 215). Blondel's confession here is certainly not an exaggeration. The philosopher of Aix was sure to have distracted the barking dogs away from Loisy and towards himself: "Je vais sans doute attirer sur moi une partie de la meute. Faire entendre quelques vérités que je crois d'autant plus opportunes qu'elles importunent, et pâtir ensuite dans mon coin, c'est le seul genre de courage que j'aie" (*CCM*, 215). What he did not dare to write in his articles is that many of the reactionary violences against Loisy were due to a psychosis of fear: "Certaines violences réactionnaires sont faites non seulement de zèle mal éclairé, mais aussi de peur, peur dûe au sentiment de la faiblesse, de la dissolution menaçante, et c'est pour cela que je fais appel au sentiment de la force de l'Eglise, parce qu'il me semble que plus elle aura une sereine confiance en elle-même, plus elle sera large et bonne" (*CCM*, 215). The limited gift of Revelation, he concludes, should cause no detriment to the efficacy of the gift of Redemption.

On February 13, Blondel responded to Léger's long apology of Loisy. Had he kept silence, he would have contributed to the error that between Gayraud and Loisy there is no *via media*. He marked his non-alignment with both of these positions in order to prevent the reactionary forces from taking over. If he praised the ecclesiastical authorities, it was in order to give them confidence and encourage them in their work of liberation. The present violence of the reactionaries is due to an ignorant fear, "ignorante des moyens de conserver le dépôt sans cet *angustisme* que je signale comme une plaie vive à guérir pour que *l'Ignis ardens* ne nous conduise pas trop à la Religio depopulata du pseudo-Malachie" (CCM, 187).

After reading Georges Frémond's Lettres à l'abbé Loisy, sur quelques points de l'Ecriture Sainte (Paris: Bloud, 1904), Blondel expressed to this author, on February 16, his agreement "sur le fond des choses," but insisted that he remains more demanding "sur les questions de méthode, en beaucoup de points" (HDC, 408). This pamphlet of Frémond's received nine editions, an Italian and a German translation. According to Frémond, the fundamental error of Loisy is "la séparation nécessaire, sinon l'irrémédiable antagonisme" between history and theology. Between the two channels through which God has chosen to speak to us--interior illumination and historical testimony--Loisy chose the latter, according to Frémond. Concerning Christ's divinity, Frémond is convinced that Jesus affirmed it clearly; if it is not clear in the Synoptics, he says, it is because this secret was transmitted orally as long as necessary, to complete what was too implicit in the Scriptures. Frémond cannot conceive Christ's resurrection as a supra-historical and purely supernatural fact; this would be "une affirmation d'une témérité sans borne." On the contrary, of all the past events, none has been attested with more vigor, unanimity, perseverance and impartiality than the Resurrection: "Quel fait serait donc historique, si celui-là ne l'est pas?" Frémond defends then the divine institution of the Church and the authenticity of the fourth Gospel. In his last chapter, he attempts a psychological essay on the state of mind of Loisy and his followers. He attributes to Loisy a belief in La Critique, a sort of "puissance céleste, infaillible, intangible, irréformable, qui promène son sceptre dominateur sur toutes les têtes, sans en excepter celle de l'Eglise." La Critique, however, objects Frémond, does not exist; there are only individual critics, fated in their subjectivism to contradict constantly each other. Loisy's defective interpretations would be due to the state of his soul, which he describes in this fashion:

> L'image de celui d'un grand nombre de laïques distingués et d'ecclésiastiques laborieux qui, à force d'entendre opposer sans cesse la science à la foi, la démocratie républicaine à la hiérarchie de l'Eglise, le progrès et l'évolution à ce qu'on appelle dédaigneusement la routine et la stagnation des sacristies, ne sont pas éloignés de croire que nos adversaires ont raison, même dans le fond de leur doctrine, et que nous avons tort, même dans le fond de la nôtre, alors que c'est dans la forme seulement que nous avons tort et que nos adversaires ont raison.

According to Frémond, it was not biblical studies that were responsible for the loss of faith of Renan, but the false philosophies of Kant and Spinoza. In a similar way, Loisy was corrupted by his assiduous reading of the literature of Protestants and rationalists.

Frémond did not fail to receive for his book against Loisy a quasi-universal acclaim in Roman Catholic circles: the cardinals Perraud and Lecôt, Mgr Pêchenard, rector of the Institut Catholique of Paris, bishop Touchet of Orléans, later cardinal, Lebas, superior of the Sulpicians, Hertzog, general procurator of the Sulpicians in Rome, and a host of French and Roman ecclesiastics sent him congratulations. Few letters of dissent have been preserved: from Naudet, Birot, and Mignot. Poulat observes that the influence of Frémond must not be confused with his objectivity: his impact was due to the fact that at that time he made himself the spokesman for the most commonly accepted ideas. The objectivism of Frémond, for whom Christianity is susceptible of a strictly scientific demonstration, the act of supernatural faith essentially the same as natural human faith, whose theological position represented the dominant one, an echo of the seminary teaching of the Sulpicians and the Roman colleges, an objectivism opposed to all forms of subjectivism, was an integral part of that extreme tendency which Blondel criticized under the name of extrinsicism (see HDC, 402-413).[1]

Again, on February 16, 1904, Mourret transmitted to Blondel some news received from Rome. The second article of

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[1] See also R. Aubert, Le Problème de l'acte de foi: Données traditionnelles et résultats des controverses récentes (Louvain, 1945).

History and Dogma made a good impression on Cardinal Mathieu and on Goyau, but not on Duchesne. On the other hand, Descurtins is stirring up a campaign in Rome to obtain the condemnation of Blondel and Laberthonnière:

> Il est plus triste encore de penser que des mesures se préparent contre le mouvement intellectuel auquel la jeunesse, tant ecclésiastique que laïque, se laissait aller avec tant d'ardeur. Que ce mouvement eût des dangers, qui le nie? Mais le meilleur remède consiste-t-il à tout supprimer? Ayons foi en la Providence! Si vous êtes atteint par l'Index vous ne serez pas seul. Notre enseignement sera atteint comme vos livres, comme nos jeunes Revues (CCM, 186).

Finally, Mourret mentions that the Roman Curia is not yet satisfied with Loisy's second letter of submission.

History and Dogma: part three

The third article of History and Dogma, entitled "The Vital Role and the Philosophical Basis of Tradition," was published on February 16, in La Quinzaine. Without a scientific link between history and dogma, Blondel does not see how the Catholics can extricate themselves from an apparent vicious circle: "How is it that the Bible legitimately supports and guarantees the Church, and the Church legitimately supports and interprets the Bible?" The only solution would be to find another complementary support for the Church. According to Blondel, there is need to distinguish a Sacred History from ordinary history, since "the History in which Catholicism obliges us to believe is not only the history which the historian can establish."

Blondel evolves here within a two-storied universe, the natural zone where history, science, and philosophy are autonomous and reason free, on the one hand; on the other hand, there is the supernatural zone, where theology rules under the infallible authority of the Church, and the faithful bow in obedience to this heteronomy. He is dealing with two histories, a profane history, subject to scientific research, and a Sacred History, transcendent to scientific inquiry and immune of human errors. He is dealing with the "two-sources" theory which was taught in most Roman Catholic seminaries and popularized by the ordinary Magisterium of the Church from Trent until Vatican II. According to Vatican I, the ordinary Magisterium enjoys also the privilege of infallibility (Denz, 3011). He wrote: "It is a commonplace to say that the Church rests on 'Scripture and Tradition'." This Tradition is the factor essential for the solution of the problem discussed here: it links facts and ideas with faith, history and dogma, texts and formulae. But what is Tradition? What is its philosophical basis?

The problem remains to understand how Tradition is linked "on the one hand, to historical facts without being absorbed into history, and that it is bound up, on the other hand, with speculative doctrines though it is not completely absorbed in them." Later theologians have made a distinction between historical tradition and doctrinal tradition; but for Blondel, Tradition links both history and dogma, while it is distinct from both. He is amazed that it is a commonplace to speak of Tradition within Roman Catholic circles, while its major role is hardly ever mentioned in discussions on the theory of dogma and the exegetical method. The reason for such a neglect must be due to the philosophical lacunae he has just criticized.

His first task consists in freeing "Tradition from the wrappings which disfigure and hide it," and in showing how "it knows history in some respects otherwise and better than the critical historian, and dogma otherwise and better than the speculative theologian." As a Roman Catholic believer, Blondel accepts the thesis of Tradition; as a philosopher, he will try to reveal its philosophical foundation.

1. "The usual idea evoked by the word Tradition is that of a transmission, principally by word of mouth, of historical facts, received truths, accepted teachings, hallowed practices and ancient customs." Such a notion, Blondel observes, cannot resist analysis. As an esoteric transmission de ore in aurem, such "discipline of the secret" has little authority and use-

fulness. Moreover, since there is a growing tendency towards written history, this would lead to the "exhaustion of Tradition itself."

In contradistinction to Scriptures, the name of Tradition has been reserved to the immense echo of oral Revelation transmitted sive voce, sive scripto, sive praxi. Such a view is based on a double presupposition: (1) "tradition only reports things explicitly said, expressly prescribed or deliberately performed"; (2) "it furnishes nothing which cannot or could not be translated into written language," "into intellectual expression." Again, since most memories are eventually written down, "Tradition, it would seem, becomes superfluous, and recedes before the progress of reflective analysis, written codification and scientific co-ordination."

Such consequences do not agree with the great esteem with which the Church holds Tradition and refers constantly to it. The usual notion of Tradition would therefore be incomplete and defective. Blondel seeks the justification of Tradition, not only as memory, but as discovery:

> I would say that Tradition's powers of conservation are equalled by its powers of conquest: that it discovers and formulates truths on which the past lived, though unable as yet to evaluate or define them explicitly, that it enriches our intellectual patrimony by putting the total deposit little by little into currency and making it bear fruit (HD, 267).

This definition could satisfy a contemporary sociologist in his observation of the historical evolution of any living society.

The average Roman Catholic makes of Tradition "a simple substitute for a written teaching." Blondel finds this notion vulgar, and not in conformity with the centuries-old practice of the Church. Tradition preserves not only the speculation, but also the practice of Christians; it relies not only on texts, but also on "an experience always in act which enables it to remain in some respects master of the texts instead of being strictly subservient to them"; it resolves crises of growth by drawing out "elements previously held back in the depths of faith and practiced, rather than expressed, systematized or reflected upon"; it does not only preserve the past, but it also discovers the future. "Turned lovingly towards the past where its treasure lies, it moves towards the future, where it conquers and illuminates." Discoveries, however, are called recoveries, because there can be no innovation where God is always present. One is struck here by the Christian neoplatonism of Blondel, which some of his best disciples, Henry Duméry and Jean Trouillard, have developed. In other words, since Tradition possesses "its God and its all," there is simply a process of "return" and "reminiscence" to recover what is already contained in the "deposit" of Revelation.

Contrary to the vulgar understanding of a clear separation between the _Ecclesia docens_ and the _Ecclesia discens_, Blondel attributes the work of Tradition to anyone who lives and thinks as a Christian, to "the saint who perpetuates Jesus among us, the scholar who goes back to the pure sources of Revelation, or the philosopher who strives to open the way to the future." If one were to ask, "What is the rule of faith? what is the constitutive norm for the Christian revelation? who is the head of the Church? Blondel would offer his Roman Catholic creed: "The various members contribute to the health of the body under the direction of the head which alone concerts and stimulates progress, in the unity of a consciousness which is divinely assisted." The rule of faith is the whole Church; the constitutive norm for Christian revelation is drawn from "Scripture and Tradition;" the head of the Church is the Pope who "alone concerts and stimulates progress, in the unity of a consciousness which is divinely assisted." This last sentence reflects probably what he meant when he wrote to Léger: "Vous trouverez peut-être que j'ai ... adulé l'Eglise et son autorité: je n'ai dit pourtant que ce que je crois juste" (CCM, 187).

Faithful to the past, "Tradition anticipates and illuminates the future." It preserves the initial gift even though "this has not been entirely formulated nor even expressly understood"; "it frees us from the very Scriptures on which it never ceases to rely with devout respect"; it helps us to reach the real Christ beyond the historic Christ. "Thus the Gospel itself appears as part of the deposit, not as the whole deposit." Blondel believes that had he time, he could prove by a more objective criticism and in the name of the texts themselves the presence in them of "an anticipated and already miraculously realized Tradition containing more of the revealed reality." He maintains a distinction between the realm of science and the realm of faith. "Something in the Church escapes scientific examination: and it is the Church which, without rejecting or neglecting the contributions of exegesis and of history, nevertheless controls them, because in the very tradition which constitutes her, she possesses another means of knowing her author, of participating in his life, of linking facts to dogma, and of justifying both the capital and the interest of her teaching." This is exactly what Blondel meant earlier in his discussions with Wehrlé and Loisy concerning the "extra-historical means for defining historically the divine consciousness of Jesus." According to Blondel, the Church neither rejects nor neglects exegesis and history, but controls them in favor of the Tradition which constitutes her and which escapes scientific examination. This is a complete reversal of his earlier philosophic attitude in the Letter on Apologetics (1896). In that treatise, Blondel claimed that nothing in the Christian revelation could escape scientific investigation.

Now, under the threat of being involved in the condemnation of Loisy, under the pressure of his theological advisors, Blondel makes some unacknowledged "retractations." From an integral scientific attitude, Blondel has shifted to what seems in some respects to be a fideist position. From a preference for the phenomenological methodology whose excesses he criticized under the name of historicism, he has shifted to a justification and pragmatic defense of the dogmatic control whose excesses he criticized under the name of extrinsicism.

Blondel draws two corollaries from his notion of Tradition. First, "the Church is a proof of itself: index sui est." Blondel wrote earlier, in his second article, that such a claim can be made only by an historicist who equates the phenomenological with the ontological (see HD, 257). Now that he has been reminded of the Vatican I position, he makes a distinction and attempts a justification of conciliar teaching. According to Blondel, the Church has within itself "a power of self-justification which is independent of historical proofs or moral probabilities." Since "the most exact analysis of the texts and the effort of individual thought are not sufficient" for the passage from facts to dogma, "the mediation of collective life, and the slow progressive labor of the Christian tradition, are essential." If dogma can be derived from facts, faith, not science, is responsible for this translation. Blondel tries to avoid individualism in the realm of faith and dogma. It would be false to say that "faith in dogma presupposes a living faith," if this should mean that "the personal belief of each believer is not justified by explicit reasons." It would be true, however, if it means "that the intellectual expression of Christian dogma was worked out in the matrix of a believing society." This intellectual expression "cannot be brought to life and further developed except by a living faith," and "one must bear within one the fullness of the Tradition" in order to understand fully a dogma. Consequently, the difficulty raised at the beginning of this treatise can be solved: "The active principle of the synthesis lies neither in the facts alone, nor in the ideas alone, but in the Tradition which embraces within it the facts of history, the effort of reason and the accumulated experiences of the faithful."

The second corollary that Blondel draws from his notion of Tradition refers to its mode of perpetuation. Blondel claims that the Church has a method which is not purely mystical to attain the real Christ. Of course, he knows that Loisy ridiculed the "extra-historical means of defining historically the consciousness of Jesus" (CCM, 103). He is much less concerned with historical description than with dogmatic interpretation. According to Blondel, there is an "extra-historical" means of penetrating the consciousness of Jesus and of constituting the Sacred History of Revelation without the placet of criticism. This Sacred History takes its material from history, but is not subject to scientific criticism. In spite of the objections of scholastic philosophers and theologians, Blondel claims that he can establish differently from them the rational organon and the laws according to which Tradition preserves the past and prepares the future. Thus he hopes to answer the objections both "of those who would tie us to a bed of Procrustes, mutilating us and forbidding us growth," and "of those who see only the Protean metamorphoses of an indefinite evolution where they should see a development governed and unified by the internal finality of an organism."

2. According to Blondel "Tradition extends further than Scripture," and it does not rely only on oral transmission. Here the philosopher of Aix goes beyond the "two-sources" theory; neither Scripture, nor oral tradition, nor both of these together suffice to penetrate "deeper and deeper into the reality revealed," and "the Revealer himself who constitutes it in its entirety." It is a problem of penetrating into what is specifically divine in Christ, into the Word of God revealed in Jesus. Since he has criticized the "objectivism" of the scholastics, Blondel fears to be accused again of "subjectivism." He wants to propose a philosophical explanation which will avoid "the fantasies of private judgment and

extravagant intuitions or deductions." Even though Tradition, according to Blondel, is supernatural in its object and its mode of action, "there must be some natural basis on which it works." This should become evident to anyone who considers how the Church in fact works. We suspect at this point that Blondel conceives Tradition as God himself working in the Church and in the world: there is a divine or supernatural element of this action insofar as it proceeds from God; there is a natural element insofar as this action becomes "incarnated" in human history. The distinction between the supernatural and the natural permits to Blondel to affirm an infallible Magisterium "divinely assisted," while he hopes to obtain a certain autonomy in the rational justification, not only of the natural aspect, but even of the supernatural mode of action of Tradition.

The Church "does not proceed by way of research nor does she appeal primarily to science." Blondel is so convinced of the infallibility of the Church that he is sure that "she will not have to revise or reform essential teaching in the light of any discovery." The Church is above any essential reformation. "She does not proceed dialectically, like a philosophy which is built up by the analysis and synthesis of balanced concepts." Even though she adapts herself to the various cultures and civilizations that she encounters, "she is the slave of no system." The Church can consider only as provisional the philosophic terminology, even that of Aristotle, in which most of its traditional formulae have been couched. In a footnote, Blondel makes a distinction between the meaning of doctrines and the formulae in which they are couched. "The meaning is a definite acquisition; but the formulae remain mutable." With this distinction, Blondel hopes to avoid the attacks of neoscholastic theologians for whom a change of vocabulary endangers the substance of faith. The distinction between the meaning of doctrines and the doctrinal formulae the Church has chosen to express faith was considered an error leading to heresy, both in the condemnation of Modernism in 1907, and in the condemnation of the erroneous philosophical systems of immanentism, pragmatism, existentialism, historicism, and rationalism in the encyclical Humani Generis in 1950 (see Denz., 3483; 3881-3883). Such a distinction was acknowledged and accepted officially for the first time by John XXIII in his opening speech at Vatican II when he said: "The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another."[1]

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[1] See The Documents of Vatican II. Edited by W. M. Abbott, S. J. (America Press, 1966), p. 715.

The same distinction was repeated by Paul VI and incorporated in the New Catechism. Speaking of conciliar definitions, the New Catechism states:

> They did not aim at determining exhaustively and for all time all the truth of the mystery. The words they used were often formulations meant to defend very definite Christian truths and values at a certain period, against certain errors. To understand properly the teachings of the councils, one must always ask: what Christian and evangelical values are at stake at the time? When we know what was being defended, we must then proclaim the same truths in the language of our own day.[1]

Blondel maintained that even in its "extra-historical" action, the Church does not "proceed by a sort of empirical mysticism," without any rational justification. In the fervor of his faith, he makes an apology for the manner according to which the Roman Catholic church proceeds:

> She need take no account of human contingencies, and, while she is not concerned to be adroit, opportune or timely, she uses any human means so as to be understood and so as to discover in men the point of contact prepared for her action. So her supernatural wisdom is always enlightened; she surrounds herself with precautions and makes use of natural means. And that is no doubt what is meant by saying that the Magisterium is guided in its infallible teaching not by revelation, nor even by inspiration, but by "assistance." Assistance implies a simple negative help; that is, God requires man to use all the resources of science and reflection as though to hide his regulative action behind the natural means (HD, 271-272).

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[1] A New Catechism (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967) p. 334.

This ambiguous passage allows Blondel to satisfy both his faith and his reason. Blondel is convinced that "the Tradition of the Church presupposes to some extent a normal use of natural activity" and consequently "it allows of rational justification." The explanation of the "secret" of this work, according to Blondel, can not be given by the scholastic philosophy, unconcerned as it is with the "subconscious and unreasoned, which are provisionally and partially irreducible to explicit thought." Blondel claims that his own philosophy of action, has an entirely different approach, for it "studies the various regular, methodically determinable ways by which a clear and formulated knowledge succeeds in expressing, more and more fully, the profound realities on which it feeds." Tradition does not transmit only what has been thought and formally expressed. Consequently, it is not sufficient to ask "only how Christ's words have been remembered, but also how he has left us the means of legitimately supplementing what he did not say. Tradition discovers what Christ did not say earlier and left to the Holy Spirit to inspire later generations of Christians. In order to illustrate this understanding of Tradition, Blondel draws an example from human psychology, according to a method which is "neither that of Aristotle nor of Richard Simon," that is, neither intellectual abstraction, nor historical criticism. There are impressions made on children which can be intelligently understood and expressed only when they have become adults: "The ears of the spirit hear more slowly than the ears of the flesh." Blondel recalls several passages from Scripture to confirm this understanding:

> But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things (Jn 14: 26).
>
> I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now (Jn 16: 12).
>
> If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (Jn 14: 23).

As a man can do more than he can understand, so "to keep the word of God means in the first place to do it, to put it into practice." The deposit of revelation would risk deformation through the failures of memory and the narrowness of intelligence if it were not "confided to the practical obedience of love." "Faithful action is the Ark of the Covenant." The essential truth of Catholicism, for Blondel, "is the incarnation of dogmatic ideas in historical facts." If one were to limit himself to this passage, he would be tempted to say that, according to Blondel, the divinity of Christ is reduced to a dogmatic idea and his humanity to an historical fact. One can recall also that for Newman the central idea of Christianity is the Incarnation. According to Blondel, Christian life rises from faithful action to "the light through a practical verification of speculative truths." Lex voluntatis, lex veritatis. In reaction to the excesses of intellectualism, Blondel prefers a certain type of voluntarism, his own philosophy of L'Action, which does not exclude the role of intelligence. The Church has an autonomous principle to discern between intellectual novelties and exegetical discoveries, between ideas and facts. Traditional faith and the love of Christ take account of "proven ways, of practice confirmed by the fruits of sanctity, of the enlightenment gained through piety, prayer and mortification." The Church's testimony is based on "the collective age-old action of the most human of men and on God's action in them." Just as the scientific method resists until evidence is submitted, so Tradition accepts only what is "compatible with it and favourable to its progress."

Though Blondel, as a Christian believer, could posit the thesis of a positive Revelation, as a philosopher, he prefers to speak of it only as an hypothesis. On the one hand, he wants to defend the orthodoxy of his faith; on the other, he wants to present his apology in terms of philosophy. The hypothesis of a positive Revelation is that of "the presence of an eternal truth in a local, temporal and contingent form." This is the uniqueness, the hapax of Christianity. Blondel sets up the philosophical axiom which should justify Tradition:

"A truly supernatural teaching is only viable and conceivable if the initial gift is a seed capable of progressive and continual growth." Once this is granted, one has simply to draw certain precise consequences. It would be incredible to maintain that the Word of Christ is fixed in immobility. It cannot have been subjected completely by its Incarnation, to the limitations of time and space. Jesus spoke in the air and wrote in the sand; his disciples had mobile and inconstant minds. The human translation of Jesus' teaching reaches us through the minds of a particular race and century. It is understood and assimilated in every generation, not only intellectually, but by a moral life and through the suggestions of the Spirit. In contrast to many Christian believers, Blondel holds that the static idea of tradition, fixism, not development (which he carefully distinguishes from evolution) is a virtual heresy. Such a static conception is not only "that of the historian who claims to seize the truth of Revelation in its earliest version," but also "that of the speculative theologian, ready to confine infinite reality in a completed synthesis." Neither scriptural exegesis alone, which is limited to the first echo, nor theological speculation alone can exhaust God's spirit. Without the Church, Christian life, and Tradition, the Gospel alone cannot reveal the supernatural in Sacred History. This Sacred History involves a "progressive ~~and~~

synthetic movement" by which we follow all the effects back to their cause, and trace twenty centuries of Christian consciousness to the revelation of the Word of God in Jesus Christ. For Blondel, "Tradition is less concerned to conserve than to discover: it will only attain the *alpha* at the *omega*. Christ is equally at the beginning and at the end of history, as he is actively present throughout its development.

Two objections have come to Blondel. Some critics object that his method disregards the "necessary role of definitive thought, of stable definitions, demonstrable and communicable formulae," in favor of individual fantasies and subjective illusions. Others object that to solve the initial problem, what is required is not so much "a method of explaining how dogmas arise through the collective work of Christian thought and religious authority, but a method personal to each individual of linking together facts and beliefs, history and doctrine." In his response to these two objections, Blondel wants to refute the naive "objectivism" of the scholastics, as well as the accusation that he would thus be led into individualism and subjectivism. He warns the "objectivists" that there is "no idea so false, none more infected by the worst kind of subjectivism, than the belief that there is no ordered reality in subjective life, and that our moral activity, once freed from the framework of a purely intellectual reflection, escapes all laws which are scientifically determinable."

Blondel refers in a footnote to an earlier article published in 1903 under the title of "Le principe élémentaire d'une logique de la vie morale."[1] In this article, Blondel draws the outline of an integral dialectic of human life as a more adequate explanation than classical logic. Such a dialectic, structured from the point of view of steresis (exclusion in reality, but not in mind) would include the classical logic, structured from the point of view of apophasis (denial, negation), or of antiphasis (contradiction). It could soften and explain the rigid norms of both Aristotle and Kant. Ideological logic, conceived simply as a phase of intellectual life is useful; but it becomes dangerous and false if one forgets that the law of contradiction, antiphasis, is simply an inadequate symbol of steresis, that is, of the exclusion of a practical choice which nevertheless continues to stimulate the mind. Consequently, dogmatic development does not take place according to the laws of classical logic, but according to the more subtle paths of the "logic of moral life." According to Blondel, "there is some danger in taking the peripatetic horizon for the bounds of the world and of thought."

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[1] This article has been reprinted in Les Premiers Ecrits de Maurice Blondel (Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), pp. 123-147.

Tradition relies on a moral method, comprises asceticism, the skill in the discernment of spirits, the collective experience of the members of the holy society, the orderly and repeated performances of Christian practices. There is no danger of individualism. The Church alone "is competent to discern miracles because the senses, science and philosophy cannot be relied upon here; for if miracles serve to prove doctrine, doctrine also serves to establish miracles." This statement seems to be a clarification of what Blondel wrote earlier: "Miracles are truly miraculous only for those who are already prepared to recognize the divine action in the most usual events" (L, 135). He was accused of individualism and subjectivism for writing that statement; now, he affirms that it is not the individual, but the Church alone, which discerns miracles. On the other hand, Blondel still maintains that miracles are not established by purely scientific observation, but by doctrine. It is only within the context of doctrine, hence of faith, that miracles are truly miraculous.

According to Blondel, it is impossible for an isolated individual to extract dogmas from texts and facts. Dogmatic definitions arise, mediante praxi fidelium et traditione Ecclesiae. "Without the Church, the faithful could not detect the true hand of God in the Bible and in souls; but, unless each believer brought his little contribution to the common life, the organism would not be fully alive and spiritual." As a layman and more than most clerical theologians, Blondel was eager to bridge the gap between the Ecclesia docens, and the Ecclesia discens, between an active clerical teaching and a passive lay obedience. Although he was not as outspoken as his close friend and priest, Laberthonnière, nevertheless, he regarded the hierarchy more as a ministry within the Christian community than as a power of domination over it. This was quite remarkable at a time, when the loss of the temporal power of the Church was a blow to most Roman Catholics, when most members of the hierarchy in France were striving for a recovery of the privileges lost in the French Revolution, when the majority of the Catholic press was favoring the restoration of the royalty under the aegis of L'Action française, when the Pope was described as a sovereign above all earthly kings, the supreme general of all the Christians. In the mind of Blondel, the Magisterium of the Church is not to be exercised independently of the whole believing community: "The infallible Magisterium is the higher and really supernatural guarantee of a function which has its natural foundation in the concert of all the powers of each Christian and of all Christianity: viribus unitis docet discendo et discit docendo semper. Just as some clerical theologians have pressed the philosopher of Aix to present a rational justification of the Church's attitude, so Blondel hopes that the clergy will learn something from the laity. As a token of his

Roman Catholic orthodoxy, he carefully adds: "Divine assistance ensures the normal, indefectible exercise of this essential function."

Summarizing the preceding discussion, Blondel caricatures again the two excesses that need to be rejected. On the one hand, extrinsicism--in which many theologians recognized the official Catholic position canonized by Vatican I, the expression of the "traditional" thesis--neglects in its apologetics the role of Tradition. According to the extrinsicist, "the Church does not search for the truth; she has nothing to learn; a Church which still has something to discover is not the Church to which Jesus Christ has taught all that he learnt from his Father." Divine revelation is conceived by them as an aerolith to be admired in a glass cage, but not analysed, for fear of discovering in it "elements which are identical with those of mere earthly bodies." There were many zealots in France who were accusing Blondel of introducing Protestant and Kantian ideas into Catholicism, such as individualism, subjectivism, rationalism (for example Schwalm, Turinaz, Gayraud, Gombault, Fontaine, Brückner, Tonquédec, and so forth). Blondel finds it ironical that these same theologians react, like the early Reformers, against the Church's development, limit themselves to a literal reading of Scripture, and discover in Scripture, "by their reason alone, the reason of their faith." If anyone is a rationalist, says Blondel, it is the extrinsicist.

At the other extreme, historicism seems to satisfy those who believe "to have found the pure spirit of science, the true meaning of tradition, of its plastic power and its transforming activity." Instead of viewing Christian revelation as an aerolith, they view it as layers of "sediment accumulated by centuries of human thought." By their failure to recognize that dogmas are "the expression of a perpetuated and experienced reality," they have lost the "realization of that unity of life and thought which is always present and always supernaturally identical." While the extrinsicist exaggerates the divine and supernatural elements of the Church, the historicist exaggerates the human and natural.

3. In a long conclusion to his "hasty sketch", Blondel recalls (A) the answer to the initial problem of method, and (B) he indicates how it resolves the fundamental questions of both extrinsicism and historicism.

(A) First, the considerations of method. Neither history, nor dialectics, nor individual efforts can justify dogmas, if these methods are taken distinctly by themselves; but they all converge in Tradition. The authority of Tradition is the Magisterium of the Church, in particular the Pope who is divinely assisted and infallible. Nevertheless, as much natural labor enters into the formulation of dogmas, there can be a rational justification for the synthesis of facts and beliefs. Blondel sees a parallel between the genesis of individual faith and the development of doctrine within the Church. As the doctrine of the Church is not simply the result of a pure knowledge of facts (historicism), nor of an objective demonstration (extrinsicism), but of a life of faith, "one goes from faith to dogma rather than from dogma to faith." In a later article, entitled "La foi et la science", written under the borrowed name of F. Mallet in the _Revue du clergé français_ in 1906, Blondel made a distinction between the principal object of Christian faith, which is God, and the intellectual expressions of that faith, which are the dogmas. Consequently, faith is primary; dogmas are secondary. In a footnote in _History and Dogma_, Blondel writes: "The fixity of arguments and definitions, in the moving depths of our life and in the obscurities of our passage to God, is simply part of the unavoidable masonry required in order to keep the road open and to permit further excavations which, in their turn, will need fresh supports." Faith is the path of our mind to God; dogmatic formulations are the unavoidable masonry which keep that path open; as the Christian proceeds further, he needs fresh supports.

The Church is attached to facts, texts, and definitions. Yet, she has a vital tradition which is a perpetually renewed and controlled commentary of the facts, texts, and definitions.

Consequently, she is not literally dependent on them. While she preserves the "old meanings," she disentangles a "spiritual intention" which transcends them. She has no fear of contradicting herself because the Holy Spirit which inspires her is untouched by the greatest intellectual innovations. The speculative method responsible for these innovations is combined with an ascetic method according to which the Catholic scholar bows to the final judgment of the Magisterium. Thanks to the consciousness that God is within her, the Church enjoys stability. "The more she clings to the reality of divine history to which she strives to conform herself, the more she liberates herself from the figurative representations and the pictures in particular colours with which the first generation described it." Far from being enslaved to a narrow reading of Scriptures, the Church enjoys the freedom of regulating their use. Her authority is not that "of a museum custodian or a Keeper of Archives or of Janissary of the Seraglio," but that of a spouse: viva conjux, dimidium Christi vivi." With this assurance, Blondel now tries to recover what is fruitful amid the excesses both of extrinsicism and historicism. As the Church "proceeds synthetically and, according to the thesis de fide of the total inspiration of the Scriptures, she proceeds from the whole to particular solutions." She can regard as figurative in Scripture what appeared to be literal to the first generation. Since Christ is her bridegroom, and is sufficient for her, "everything else is but a bymbol and a preparation." Endowed with such a confidence, the Church can "dispense with scaffoldings which were provisionally required to shelter the growth of her work or useful for her spiritual edification but which may have to be cleared away, not to overturn the building but to reveal proportions hitherto unobserved and its granite consistency." Blondel used this very image, two pages earlier, in speaking of dogmatic formulations. We can recall Blondel writing to Loisy that he shared a similar ambition, the rejection of the scholastic system and the medieval *fixism*, in favor of modern critical methods. He was convinced of this necessary task: "reviser *tout l'enseignement traditionnel*, au point de vue philosophique, pour le rendre théoriquement plus intelligible, en se servant de l'histoire, pour le rendre positivement plus exact" (*CCM*, 89). Blondel hopes to maintain at the same time the dogmatic approach of extrinsicism, with the Church proceeding "from the whole to particular solutions," along with a modern philosophical approach, which implies the revision of the whole traditional teaching. Blondel dares to recover an intuition of Loisy: Catholicism owes its power "to its consciousness of being the culmination of man's religious life." He reacts against his theological advisors, who waged "une guerre amicale de religion" and accused him of relativizing both the Scriptural revelation and the institutional structure of the Church: "For while its mission is to preserve and propagate the gift of Revelation, which is always something limited, it does not forget the universal gift of Redemption, which is the divine reality, the absolute term, to which revealed knowledge refers, though this is not identical with it. And to draw men to the body of the Church it becomes more than ever necessary to open to them her soul."

Confident in the power of her Tradition, the Church "preserves her sovereign authority in regard to Scripture." This freedom becomes the source of a renewal: "for with the help of the past she liberates the future from the unconscious limitations and illusions of the present." In a footnote, Blondel observes that had he time, he would insist on "the doctrine which ensures the relative independence of the Church and the Scriptures," and which "also co-ordinates them." Since no speculative synthesis can ever exhaust life, Blondel felt the inadequacies of the scholastic synthesis which entertained such a claim, such a pretention of holding to absolute truth. The denial of any section of the scholastic synthesis appeared to many extrinsicist opponents of Blondel as equivalent to the overthrow of the whole Catholic doctrine. Since the modern critical man can no longer maintain the naive realism of the scholastics, Blondel suggests to detach Catholic doctrine from the provisional scaffoldings of that system. Otherwise, the sophism which caused the loss of faith of so many men would persist. Thus Renan wrote in his Souvenirs: "They were right not to make any concessions, since a single admission of error ruins the edifice of absolute truth." Tradition provides to the Church "a means of setting limits to the exigencies of history or the deductions of theology, and a means of self-development." It overcomes the excesses of both historicism and extrinsicism, and instead of the fixism of the scholastic system, it allows for the development of doctrine within the Church. Latitudinarianism, or the tendency to universalize Redemption is no more a danger to orthodoxy than angustism, or the tendency to restrict Redemption within the limits of Revelation.

(B) After a discussion of methodological problems, Blondel arrives at the basic doctrinal questions. If critical science, speculative theology and moral practice evolve in isolation from each other, there will be "an ultimate divorce between the conclusions of history and ecclesiastical definitions or religious practices." In order to show "their real interdependence," "their relative autonomy and their compensating action," the facts of Christian theology must not be isolated from the science of Christian life. According to historicism, the work of Christ was just "a means of stimulating the religious consciousness; according to extrinsicism, Christian truth is only a truth, operating only when known." Christ is more than simply a means, or a truth; he is "a reality." The work of Christ corresponds "through the Incarnation, to a metaphysical function, while answering, through the Redemption, to moral and substantial exigencies and applicable in certain conditions even to those who are ignorant of its efficacy." Blondel gives here a glimpse of his "panchristisme." He believes that universal Redemption is not impeded by the limitations of Revelation.

Consequently, the Christian supernatural can no more consist, "as the extrinsicist thesis implies on the one hand, in a notional relationship determined and imposed by God," as the juxtaposition of the supernatural above the natural; nor reduced, on the other hand, "as the historicist thesis implies to being no more than another name for the divine or for a sort of concentration of it in nature itself," as a confusion of the supernatural with the natural. It is "a love-relationship which insinuates a new order into the normal order," one in which "the slave can become the friend, the brother, or even tanquam Deus Dei." When he speaks of the natural, Blondel is careful to observe that he is not thinking of the notion of pure nature found in theological textbooks: "the 'state of nature' is a pure abstraction which does not exist and never has existed." Moreover, he wants to distinguish between the "supernatural life formed in us by baptism and habitual grace and the antecedent supernatural state in which man is placed so as to be able to realize this life of grace." Theology alone can treat of the supernatural life, the reality of which faith experiences. Blondel's philosophy, on the other hand, limited to reason, considers man as he now exists, deprived of original justice, but experiencing "a need and an aptitude for recovering it." In another context, Blondel spoke of this state as a "transnatural state." By this expression, he means that man is never satisfied with himself, that he necessarily remains open to a possible grace which is both necessary and inaccessible. The vocation to the supernatural life involves already a grace antecedent to habitual grace. Blondel tries to combine modern philosophy with scholastic theology. He continued to be misunderstood both by modern philosophers and scholastic theologians.

The fundamental problem, in the mind of Blondel, is "that of the relation between man and God in Christ, and consequently, of the relation of Christ to each one of us."

Many of the old answers are deficient in the present disputes; he suggests further research in the domain of psychology, history, and metaphysics. Christ's consciousness remains practically an unexplored problem. The mechanical juxtaposition of the abstract and static entities of nature and personality do not exhaust the mystery.

The mystery of Jesus in the soul of the saints cannot have been only a pious fairy-tale. Blondel repeats here what he objected earlier to Loisy. As we saw, Loisy was not rejecting the mystical experiences of the saints as "un pieux roman" as Blondel accused him of doing. What he said was that Wehrlé's claim that Christ enjoyed the consciousness of being God from the very moment of his conception is, for the historian, who is limited to phenomenological observation, "un pur roman." (CCM, 83). The fact that Blondel repeats again his objection indicates that he is much less concerned with the scientific methodology of the historian, than with orthodox christology. If Christ is God, then "the consciousness of his divinity is less able to desert him than the consciousness of our humanity can desert us, and the consciousness of his humanity embraces our human consciousness." "He is the universal stigmatic marked by all our human miseries: aliter per carnem, aliter per divinitatem, as St. Bernard says, idem eadem cognoscens." Blondel summarizes here his "panchristime":

> For if his human consciousness is not absorbed by the light of the Word, then it is because all our humanities serve as a screen for his humanity; because, if we exist through him, he exists, in a sense, through us; because he is literally the Son of Man, and if the creation finds its consistency in Christ's knowledge and his loving will, Christ's singular

> reality as a contingent being consists in the universal fulfillment of all life and of every being that was created in him (HD, 285).

Finally, Blondel concludes that possibly a "conception of Tradition obtained with the help of a philosophy of action" can resolve the crisis between "two antagonistic and even irreconcilable attitudes," receiving from each "truths which cannot and must not be ignored." No science can remain isolated from other sciences, nor from practical living, which a philosophy of action can analyze and synthesize, but cannot replace. Only in life and action does one find the indivisible synthesis of historical facts and theological definitions which are "simply faithful translations of it into different languages." All the forms of speculation and all the forms of Christian living must contribute to guarantee Catholicity. "The synthesis of dogma and facts is scientifically effected because there is a synthesis of thought and grace in the life of the believer, a union of man and God, reproducing in the individual consciousness the history of Christianity itself." Even though the Church has not yet succeeded to elaborate an adequate theology of Tradition, Blondel believes that she alone possesses implicitly the solution, she alone "is competent to form in souls the authentic Christ." Therefore, the Church is not guilty of "a substitution of persons."

CHAPTER VIII

THE AFTERMATHS OF HISTORY AND DOGMA

When Blondel was informed on February 16, 1904--the very day he published the last section of History and Dogma--that he might be condemned by the Congregation of the Index, he wrote to Mourret. He believes that he is without sufficient protection against "la coalition de l'ignorance, de la routine, des vues intéressées et des intrigues." It might be good if Mourret requested, once again, the protection and intervention of Cardinal Perraud (BV, 121).

Again, on February 17, Blondel wrote to Laberthonnière:

> De divers côtés m'arrivent les bruits les plus alarmants. Un vent violent de réaction se déchaine, et concentre sa rage contre le Néo-Kantisme, c'est-à-dire, faut-il le croire, contre vous et moi. Les bons Démocrates chrétiens qui se sont sentis fort menacés et à qui l'on a dit qu'ils ne se feraient supporter qu'en criant haro sur le baudet philosophique, donnent à toutes voix. Et Décurtins vient de faire à Rome et jusqu'auprès de Pie X une campagne fougueuse nommément contre vous et moi. On n'attend qu'une dénonciation à l'Index, et l'affaire, pense-t-on, y est! (LAB, 133).

Blondel asks Laberthonnière if his study on Le réalisme chrétien contains any clear anti-scholastic propositions; if so, these might light a bigger fire. God alone can save them against "la coalition de l'ignorance, de la routine, des ambitions et des intrigues." There is need of a radical change, not only of intellectual habits, but also of moral attitudes. The philosophers are greater targets for the reactionary forces than the historians and the social leaders. Even those who might have understood them are against them: "Nous avons contre nous tous les Batiffol et les Duchesne; Mgr Duchesne a accueilli mes deux premiers articles avec des plaisanteries narquoises" (LAB, 133).

Laberthonnière answered on February 18. He has just read the third article of History and Dogma and recognizes in it ideas parallel to those with which he ends his Réalisme chrétien. According to Laberthonnière, Blondel's third article contains rich ideas, but it lacks composition and distinct articulation. Because of these defects, he will undoubtedly be misunderstood. For example, Lorin reported to Laberthonnière that Loisy claims to have been misunderstood. And Laberthonnière replied: "Je lui ai expliqué que ce que vous appelez l'historicisme ce n'est pas Loisy. Vous l'avez assez nettement dit. Mais je vois qu'on s'y méprend quand même [The underlining is mine]. Cardinal Perraud requested a copy of Blondel's articles to prepare his refutation of Loisy. A letter of Goyau to Lorin recently mentioned that the Roman Curia hopes to obtain the condemnation of Blondel, Laberthonnière, Fonsegrive, and even

Brunetière, after that of Loisy. Laberthonnière observes that, for the sake of prudence, he restricted to a minimum his critique of the scholastics in the Réalisme chrétien: "Quant au reste ce sera évidemment déconcertant pour nos théologiens et encore plus pour nos historicistes. Et à mon sens les historicistes, c'est encore plus Batiffol, Lagrange et compagnie que Loisy." (MMd, 41). On this point, both Laberthonnière and Blondel agreed that Loisy did not really claim to limit himself to history alone to make an apology for Christianity. Laberthonnière adds that Loisy has been left no choice between "l'apostasie et le néant," while the exegete wants neither the one, nor the other. If Denis is forced to abandon the Annales de philosophie chrétienne, he promised to leave them to Laberthonnière. In 1905, Blondel bought them secretly and committed their official direction to Laberthonnière . Laberthonnière mentions again that Guibert, the seminary superior of the Institut Catholique of Paris, has thrown the anathema against both himself and Blondel in the preface of a new book by Besse. Apparently, both Tyrrell and Bremond are encountering serious difficulties within the Society of Jesus and are on the verge of revolt. Finally, Laberthonnière adds that if reactionaries like Décurtins can entertain the Pope, why not those who are in favor of progress? The attitude of certain officials is distressing; for example the papal Nuncio in Paris has publicly accused Loisy of being "une canaille, une crapule, un porco." Is it possible to be more vile, observes Laberthonnière (MMd, 41).

On February 17, 19, and 20, Cardinal Perraud published in L'Univers a pastoral letter on "Les erreurs de M. L'abbé Loisy condamnées par le Saint-Siège." According to Perraud, Loisy's thesis on revelation is infected by Protestant illuminism and rationalism; along with other neocritics, Loisy considers the Gospels as "pieuses élucubrations"; Loisy denies the divinity of Christ; he views the Resurrection as a "pieuse créance, qui échappe à toute démonstration scientifique, sans valeur au tribunal de l'histoire"; he denies the divine institution of the Church and the sacraments. Perraud rejects all the errors of Loisy in the name of the whole Catholic tradition (see HDC, 257-269).

Blondel received several letters of protest against his articles on History and Dogma, on the grounds that he contradicted Loisy. One reader wrote on February 17 that he agrees with Blondel and Loisy on the insufficiency of science to foster the Christian life and to verify the presence of the supernatural. But he makes two objections: (a) Blondel almost denied the legitimacy of the historian's autonomy. He does not seem to mark the difference between what the historian can believe as a Christian and what he can prove by the historical testimonies. Granted that Blondel declared that he was not pointing to Loisy, he was too ambiguous to convince his average readers. (b) In his last page, Blondel wrote: "Entre la dogmatique et l'exégèse il y a une science, une vraie science de l'action, capable de dégager au profit d'une théologie expérimentale et progressive les lecons tirées de l'histoire par la vie" (Lettre, 228). Blondel's correspondent wonders why this method should be called a science? It will be a philosophy of religious life, since beyond the phenomena, which is the object of sciences, it seeks the progress of being. Finally, he concludes: "Vous avez parlé en philosophe, excellement; j'ai peur que vous n'ayez trop rabaissé l'oeuvre de la science et parfois semblé méconnaître son autonomie comme science" (CCM, 191-193).

Blondel answered these two objections [his response remains unpublished] and the priest, whose name was withheld in CCM responded: "Vous voulez que l'historien catholique soit un théologien. Je crois qu'il vaut mieux pour tous qu'il ne parle qu'en historien. Sans quoi, les historiens rationalistes mêleront eux aussi leurs conclusions rationalistes à leurs travaux historiques et la confusion des méthodes sera ruineuse pour la science historique" (CCM, 194). He prefers the division of labor proposed by Loisy; Blondel confused the role of historian with his attitude as a believer; he linked the historical certitude to dogmatic faith and wished the historian to say exactly the same thing as the theologian. In conclusion, Blondel's correspondent regrets that in contrast to the liberals with whom he wanted to be associated, the philosopher of Aix actually lent his support to the reactionary forces (CCM, 194-195).

This letter offended Blondel and he answered in a caustic fashion on February 25. In the presence of the "partial infallibility" of his correspondent's argumentation, he sees only "une jolie nichée de paralogismes, de confusions et de ...scholasticismes." Blondel takes one by one his correspondent's objections and refutes them, either by saying that he was misunderstood, or by making new distinctions: "C'est vous qui pratiquez l'intransigeance scholastique du tout ou rien; et c'est moi que revendique le droit aux nuances, aux doutes, aux réserves de la critique." Blondel adds that Tradition and the Authority of the Church need to be heard in the testimony of science: "Cette Tradition et cette Autorité de l'Eglise affirmant l'action personnelle du Christ en nous, la valeur morale de sa Passion, la continuité réelle de son ministère douloureux et de son ministère glorieux, c'est là un fait contre lequel la critique ne saurait prévaloir." If the critic must remain objective, he should consider that fact. There is no reason to end the scientific understanding of Christ to the moment of his death: "En faisant de sa mort le terme absolu de notre science possible, et en reléguant totalement dans le domaine de la pure foi tout ce qui peut contribuer à prouver sa survie, sa gloire, sa divinité, vous donnez, hélas, trop largement raison à ceux (et j'en connais) qui de ce fidéisme ont conclu contre la foi catholique." This would still be a monumental error of scholasticism, says Blondel: "On ne peut croire et savoir en même temps!" Blondel remains convinced that in Loisy's work there are "à côté des vues libératrices et salutaires, des illusions, des erreurs de méthode, des parties ruineuses." This is the reason why he tried to discriminate between the positive and the negative elements, by raising the debate above the questions of personalities, and thus preventing the wind of reaction from destroying everything. How could he have offended Loisy when he never named him publicly: "J'ai défendu au lecteur, sous peine de calomnie, de lui imputer les griefs que j'adressais à des interprétations possibles de ses doctrines" (CCM, 198).

On February 20, Blondel informed Laberthonnière that he wrote to Beaudouin in Rome. He hopes that Lepidi and Cardinal Pierrotti will intervene in their favor. Blondel recommends to Laberthonnière certain measures of precaution for his Réalisme chrétien: "Notamment, vous pourriez prouver que vous avez présent à l'esprit le texte qu'on a fait signer à Bonnetty le

11 juin 1855 et que vous ne tombez pas du tout sous le coup des censures portées contre son anti-scolasticisme; car il s'agissait alors contre le traditionnalisme et le fidéisme de Bautain et compagnie de maintenir la nécessité et la légitimité de l'usage de la raison dans l'apologétique et dans la théologie" (LAB, 133).

On the same day, Mourret praises Blondel for his third article which he believes is the best. He knows of no other pages of Blondel which are more suggestive for the critics and more reassuring for the Catholics. And then Mourret adds: "Vous avez été bien inspiré de nommer votre principe synthétique de son nom traditionnel de Tradition. Si vous aviez eu l'idée de l'appeler 'l'expérience collective de l'Eglise,' ou 'l'action de l'Esprit infaillible sur la communauté chrétienne,' ou d'autre façon analogue, vous étiez bien compromis. Si vous aviez eu le malheur de le baptiser 'l'évolution immanente,' vous étiez perdu" (CCM, 188).

On the following day, Wehrlé sent a letter of gratitude in the name of a large anonymous group of faithful: "Dans la mesure où je puis parler au nom de l'Eglise, je vous remercie au nom des âmes prises dans la tourmente et au nom de l'Eglise secouée par la tempête." (CCM, 188). His enthusiasm for Blondel's third article is boundless: "Jamais, dans toute votre oeuvre passée, vous ne vous étiez élevé à une pareille hauteur et vous n'étiez descendu à une si grande profondeur; jamais la plénitude de votre christianisme et la sûreté de votre catholicisme ne s'étaient affirmées avec tant de force, d'éclat et d'éloquence. Vous êtes la preuve que c'est toujours en pâtissant que le Christ continue d'éclairer et de régénérer le monde" (CCM, 188). He hopes that such sacrifices and pains on the part of Blondel will not be rewarded by a condemnation. Whatever happens, he will have liberated the conscience of many in making use of the holy freedom which belongs to the children of God. He will have spoken in the name of countless others who were obliged to keep silence. The fact that he is a layman and that he represents an immense group in the Church will certainly be taken into consideration. Blondel has recovered the true and adequate notion of Tradition, which allows for a correct understanding of the Church and the history of dogmas. His substitution of a philosophy of being in place of a philosophy of knowledge, of an ontology in place of a phenomenology, provides the key for the problem of apologetics. Wehrlé mentions Mignot's article, "Critique et Tradition" as a treatment parallel to that of Blondel. But he is extremely critical of Cardinal Perraud's refutation of Loisy's errors: "Et dire que cette réfutation trouve des admirateurs dans le haut clergé! ... Franchement, si ce n'était pas là une sorte de gâtisme qu'on voudrait croire sénile, il faudrait déclarer que c'est un monument d'improbité intellectuelle" (CCM, 190).

On the same day, February 21, Laberthonnière mentions again that Décurtins is pressing for their condemnation in Rome, on the grounds of their presumed Neo-Kantism: "Cette campagne contre le néo-kantisme dont on nous fait les représentants est tellement stupide, qu'il devrait être facile de la faire comprendre à quiconque a seulement un peu de bonne volonté" (BV, 147). As a university professor, continues Laberthonnière, Blondel is well qualified to go to Rome. Cardinal Vives and bishop Boeglin could also do something (see BV, 121).

On February 22, Blondel informed his two spiritual advisors of the perils that he and Laberthonnière were running. To Wehrlé he wrote: "A Rome, on considère Loisy comme 'écrasé." A qui le tour? Aux philosophes...Veuillez donc, bien cher ami, m'aider à prendre en moi les sentiments du martyre peut-être nécessaire et prochain; et réfléchissez dès à présent à l'exacte mesure de ce que j'aurais à faire, au cas où une mise à l'Index surviendrait soudain. Voyez même ce que je devrais faire, si on me mettait, après soumission, en demeure de donner ma démission" (BV, 121-122). Blondel was probably thinking of Loisy who was told at the Sorbonne that he would be dismissed if he made an unconditional submission to Rome, for an unconditional submission meant the end to free scholarly inquiry and criticism.

And to Mourret Blondel wrote: "Je suis averti...de la campagne Décurtins contre nous à Rome. Mais rien de plus précis" (BV, 122).

On the same day, Beaudouin wrote to Blondel to dissipate his fears. Apparently, there is no cause for worry either from the Holy Office, or from the Index. (MMd, 62; see BV, 137). On February 23, Laberthonnière informed Blondel that there is less danger for the latter than for himself: "Je suis plus visé que vous parce qu'on me lit plus facilement" (BV, 122).

On February 24, Blondel tells Laberthonnière that it is impossible for him to go to Rome. First of all, he is not healthy enough for such a trip. Secondly, it would be useless since the work of the Roman Congregations is surrounded by a great secrecy. Thirdly, he does not want to appear as an accused man begging for a favor, and certain indiscretions might set off the mechanism of the guillotine. It would be preferable if Laberthonnière wrote a positive letter to be circulated among influential authorities:

> Mais il faut, dans la rédaction de ce document, être très circonspect, ne point paraître se justifier, n'accuser personne et garder une allure confiante et paisiblement triomphante, comme si nous étions du côté du ... manche. Le meilleur peut-être serait de s'étonner ingénument du réveil de certaines incriminations que les juges compétents ont reconnues mal fondées, mais que des personnes intéressées rééditent et qui peuvent en effet faire impression sur ceux qui n'ont pas une connaissance directe des doctrines visées" (LAB, 133).

The accusations raised against "le dogmatisme moral,"--which was Laberthonnière's version of the main theme of Blondel's

L'Action--stem from misunderstandings. In clarifying his position, Laberthonnière should emphasize the positive and orthodox aspects of his doctrine and leave aside the analytical method and the adaptations required: "Car cela ne pourrait être compris et empêcherait qu'on ne comprenne nos *vraies* intentions et nos *vraies* conclusions" (*BL*, 172).

On the same day, Blondel wrote to Mourret: "Provisoirement, je me borne à répondre au P. Beaudouin en lui demandant de veiller, et en lui communiquant un mémoire, je ne dis pas justificatif, mais explicatif. Et j'ajoute que s'il jugeait ma présence utile à Rome, il veuille bien me le dire. Il prendra sans doute l'avis du P. Lepidi" (*BV*, 122).

On three successive days, Charles Maignen wrote a series of articles in *La Vérité française*, entitled "Deux mentalités incompatibles." Apart from the article "Critique et Tradition" of Mignot, the articles of Blondel, "Histoire et Dogme," appear to Maignen as "la plus notable tentative qui ait été faite pour réhabiliter dans l'opinion catholique les idées de M. Loisy." According to Maignen, Blondel's *Letter on Apologetics* was responsible for the erroneous theory of immanence. Blondel's notion of Tradition, in harmony with that of Loisy and Newman, is false from the viewpoint of Catholic dogma. For the Catholics, according to Maignen, Tradition means *conservation*; for Blondel, it means *evolution*. The words "implicit-explicit" are equivocal: for Blondel, they mean that Tradition supplies what Jesus has not explicitly revealed in the New Testament: "M. Loisy estime que l'Eglise n'a pas encore acquis la conscience de son développement. M. Blondel avoue que la théorie en est à faire mais que l'Eglise en a l'expérience séculaire, ce qui ne contredit pas (au contraire) l'affirmation de M. Loisy." (See HDC, 573). Blondel's liberal "catholicisme" is incompatible with "le catholicisme sans restriction et sans épithète que nous voulons professer et servir." When the same Creed is recited by both camps, the words have a different meaning. Blondel is guilty of having given to the word of Tradition "une signification qu'il n'a jamais eue et qu'il n'aura certainement jamais dans la langue des théologiens catholiques." His doctrine is incompatible with that of the council of Trent. According to Maignen, extrinsicism is the traditional method of the Catholic theologians while historicism is what Loisy calls historical criticism. While Loisy excludes extrinsicism in favor of historicism, Blondel tries to mix them both:

> Notre philosophe ne conteste aucune des conclusions soi-disant historiques de M. Loisy. Sans dire expressément qu'il les admet toutes, il est manifeste que son système permet de n'en sacrifier aucune et même d'en ajouter de plus hardies encore. M. Blondel part d'un fait qui lui paraît certain, à savoir qu'il y a un écart prodigieux entre l'enseignement du Christ historique et le dogme actuellement professé par l'Eglise catholique. Il lui parait évident que beaucoup de nos dogmes n'ont jamais

> été enseignés même implicitement par Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ. Dès lors, il s'agit d'expliquer comment ce que Dieu n'a pas révélé aux apôtres, ce dont les apôtres n'ont jamais eu l'idée, peut être enseigné par l'Eglise comme faisant partie de la révélation." (See HDC, 572).

On February 27, Bremond informed Blondel that Hügel has read History and Dogma and is preparing a refutation. Bremond is personally favorable to Loisy: "Pour moi, Loisy m'a aidé à garder ma foi dans la divinité de Notre-Seigneur, et je lui ai beaucoup de reconnaissance. Je n'aime pas le ton de certains passages, mais je crois qu'il y a sous cette demi-suffisance de paysan parvenu, une vraie vie intérieure" (CCM, 215).

On February 28, Blondel thanks Valensin for his sympathy: "J'apprends que de divers côtés on s'agite pour faire condamner les philosophes comme on a condamné les critiques. Pour ma part je suis résigné à tout, soumis à tout, mais la pensée que tant d'âmes en marche vers la lumière seraient scandalisées, attristées, repoussées m'est douloureuse" (BV, 120). He seeks the approbation of a few Jesuits, in particular that of Moisant and Le Bachelet, who had earlier criticized Blondel. On the same day, Blondel sent to Loisy an offset copy of History and Dogma with a letter in which he explains his motives for writing that treatise.

> Si malgré une longue hésitation, j'ai pris la plume; si après de nouveaux retards, je me suis décidé à

> donner le bon à tirer, ce n'est que pressé par une sorte de remords. Voyant ce que je crois voir, il m'a semblé que c'était un devoir de le dire. Il y a une parole qu'on n'effacera pas de l'Evangile, parce que, sous une forme équivalente, elle est d'abord inscrite dans l'âme: "Qui aime des proches ou des amis plus que moi n'est pas digne de moi" (CCM, 199).

In other words, in spite of his reluctance in taking a stand in this controversy which might easily be viewed as a contradiction of Loisy, whose scientific work he admires, he felt duty-bound to serve the interest of God before those of friendship. He is sorry if by his action he increased the trials of Loisy. At least, he has tried to raise the debate above questions of personalities: "J'ai mis le lecteur en garde contre des applications qui ne sauraient être que calomnieuses" (CCM, 200). After all, he did not stigmatize the position of any author in particular, but only some "possibilités logiques"; he drew "deux caricatures, non pour que chacun reconnaisse son adversaire dans l'image artifiellement outrée, mais pour que de part et d'autre l'on se mette en garde contre des tendances qui ne sont légitimes, selon moi, qu'à la condition d'être complétées et compensées" (CCM, 200). That is to say, he drew the extreme logical consequences of two attitudes vitiated in their principles, in order that those who are inclined towards the one or the other might search for correctives. He feels that Loisy personally does not need his explanations. Finally, he wishes that Loisy would consent to the heroism of abnegation, that is, that he will submit to the disciplinary measures of the ecclesiastical authorities. In a postscript, Blondel adds: "Vous savez sans doute qu'après les exégetes, on demande la tête des philosophes. Ainsi que je le prévoyais du reste, mes articles ont mécontenté à droite plus encore qu'à gauche" (CCM, 201). He refers then to the article of Maignen in La Vérité française of February 26 (see page 410 above).

On the same day, February 28, Loisy wrote a personal letter to Pius X:

> Très Saint-Père, je connais toute la bienveillance de Votre Sainteté et c'est à son coeur que je m'addresse aujourd'hui. Je veux vivre et mourir dans la communion de l'Eglise catholique. Je ne veux pas contribuer à la ruine de la foi dans mon pays. Il n'est pas en mon pouvoir de détruire en moi-même le résultat de mes travaux. Autant qu'il est en moi, je me soumets au jugement porté contre mes écrits par la Congrégation du Saint-Office. En témoignant de ma bonne volonté, et pour la pacification des esprits, je suis prêt à abandonner l'enseignement que je professe à Paris, et je suspendrai de même les publications scientifiques que j'ai en préparation (AL, 123).

Pius X did not answer directly to Loisy, but to Cardinal Richard. The Cardinal called Loisy and read him a few passages of the Pope's letter. Pius X was requesting no less than an absolute retractation; he ended with these words: "Certes, on ne lui demande pas de ne plus écrire, mais d'écrire pour défendre la tradition, conformément à la parole de Saint Rémi à Clovis: 'Adore ce que tu as brûlé et brûle ce que tu as adoré'" (AL, 124). In the mind of Pius X, this meant for Loisy to reject the critical study of the Bible and to return to the scholastic approach which he had rejected. A phrase of Pius X, in particular, "cette lettre adressée à mon coeur ne partait pas du coeur," struck Loisy to the heart; he later observed: "Eh bien si, elle en venait!" (See AL, 124-125). Apparently, the Pope's attitude broke what was left of Loisy's attachment to Rome. This is the interpretation given by Louis Canet and Henri Bremond, two of his intimate friends. Canet wrote: "Il fallut un mot cruellement inique de Pie X pour rompre le lien qui l'unissait au chef de l'Eglise." And Bremond: "Voici peut-être le plus décisif ou, du moins, le premier en date parmi les coups irréparables" (See AL, 125). On the other hand, the cynical Houtin, who reproached Loisy for his fideism while he himself had rejected completely Christian faith in favor of positive science, continued to suspect Loisy of duplicity and hypocrisy. Starting with the myth of duplicity created by Batiffol and circulated by Rivière, most Roman Catholic historians deny to Loisy any concern for intellectual honesty and attribute his failure to submit to the Roman condemnations to a moral perversion.

On February 28, again, Laberthonnière told Blondel his distress after reading Maignen's articles in La Vérité française: "Ce qui est navrant c'est que ce sont ces hommes-là qui ont de l'influence." The crisis involves a reaction of neoscholastics against modern philosophy much more than the defense of a Christian dogma: "Ce qu'on défend contre nous c'est une théorie philosophique de la connaissance et non un dogme chrétien. Néo-Kantisme signifie tout ce qui n'est pas la théorie scolastique." Along with a few other priests, Laberthonnière is filled with anxiety at the perspective offered to them: persecution within the Church where membership is for them a condition of union with Christ. Laberthonnière was told by Mourret that Blondel is sending a long memoir of apologies to Rome. This memoir, along with a few copies of History and Dogma, needs to be sent hastily, as the rumors of a possible condemnation are still threatening (MMd, 41, see BV, 122; 147; 239).

There were other enthusiastic receptions of Blondel's third article on Tradition. Clain, a seminary professor of Orléans, wrote on February 28: "Si M. Loisy a pu dire que le quatrième Evangile n'est que l'écho du Mystère chrétien et de la prédication du premier siècle dans une conscience profondément philosophique et mystique, il me semble que votre travail n'est aussi que l'écho de la conscience chrétienne au début du vingtième siècle dans une âme hautement philosophique et mystique" (BV, 126). Clain can understand the bitterness of Loisy when the latter encounters so many episcopal refutations deprived of Christian attitudes (See BV, 127). On the same day, Paul Sabatier sent to Blondel a clipping from the Corriere *della Sera* of Milan in which it is rumored that the Congregation of the Index has ready for publication the condemnation of two more books: Blondel's *L'Action* and Laberthonnière's *Le dogmatisme moral*. Again, Mourret added his share of pessimistic news: "On me dit que M. Maignen vous a dénoncé à Rome. Si vous n'avez pas encore écrit au P. Beaudouin, hâtez-vous de le faire (*BV*, 122). Mourret is writing to some influential friends, but he doubts whether he will find a courageous bishop.

Blondel sent two copies of *History and Dogma* to Beaudouin on February 29 with the following comment:

> Dans mon intention, cette étude est destinée à détacher certains jeunes gens, séduits par le méthode et même par les conclusions de M. Loisy, d'une doctrine que je crois et que j'ai voulu montrer ruineuse pour la foi. Si quelques formules vous paraissent sujettes à critique, sans doute elles ne vous sembleront pas trop dangereuses, puisqu'enfin je ne cesse de ramener mon lecteur à l'autorité de l'Eglise" (*MMd*, 62).

Blondel informs Beaudouin of the various rumors published in French and Italian newspapers which resurrect the old accusations against him of introducing in the Church in France Kantian and Protestant influence. Blondel protests his strict Roman Catholic orthodoxy and declares that he is radically opposed to fideism, subjectivism, and individualism:

> Ce qu'on me reproche, c'est de combattre la philosophie séparée, de montrer que la raison ne peut opposer une fin de non-recevoir à la foi ni repousser par la question préalable l'étude du catholicisme, en un mot

> de croire à la raison sans être rationaliste, et de professer publiquement ma foi sans être fidéiste. Si donc une condamnation survenait, ce n'est pas du tout le néo-kantisme qui se trouverait atteint en ma personne; et l'on interpréterait une telle mesure comme un désaveu de toute tentative de philosopher autrement que sur commande" (MMd, 62).

Blondel insists that his philosophy was inspired by these words of the Gospel, qui facit veritatem venit ad lucem and by the method prescribed by St. Thomas in his Summa Contra Gentiles, I-II, 4: "ex his quae dicunt errantes, rationes assumere ad eorum errores destruendos." In a postscript, Blondel adds that a condemnation by the Index of L'Action would be meaningless since the book has been out of print and out of sale since 1895.

Again, on February 29, Blondel informs Mourret of the rumors reported by Sabatier, of his letter to Beaudouin, and suggests the intervention of Cardinal Mathieu. Because of the accusations of Maignen, Gayraud, and others, Blondel realizes that extrinsicism is not only a caricature of "aerolithisme," but a strong party in the Church, deprived of the spirit of the Gospel.

On the same day, Wehrlé wrote to Laberthonnière: "Il est dur d'être mis en présence, non de la haute, souveraine et impartiale authorité de l'Eglise, mais de la tyrannique, usurpatrice et haineuse entreprise d'une cabale qui prétend opérer une mainmise sur l'Eglise. Wehrlé is a firm believer in divine Providence: "Il n'arrivera rien que Dieu ne permette et ce qui est réellement du Lui dans l'oeuvre de chacun de nous passera toujours" (LAB, 3).

In the February issue of the Annales de philosophie chrétienne, Denis published his letter of submission addressed to Cardinal Steinhuber in response to the condemnation of two of his books; he added a letter in which he wrote: "Il ne faut pas oublier que c'est le P. Mazzella qui a créé e capite suo l'héresie philosophique dite le subjectivisme radical, comme c'est le P. Fontaine qui a créé le kantisme." (BV, 99).

On March 1, Blondel wrote two letters, to Beaudouin and to Laberthonnière. To Beaudouin, he recommends that his previous letter of February 29 be shown to influential authorities in Rome, along with the explanatory memoir which he now forwards. Blondel is surprised that Maignen should accuse him of equating Tradition with "evolution," since he rejected explicitly the notion of "evolution" in favor of that of "development." Maignen cannot be any more orthodox when he calls upon the Council of Trent to prove that Tradition is founded on the dictations of the Holy Spirit. (MMd, 62). Blondel shares with Laberthonnière his disappointment that Maignen's accusations have received some official approvals: "Ah, il n'est pas aisé aux philosophes de se faire entendre; car si les idées sont, à certains égards, la force des forces, c'est aussi la faiblesse des faiblesses. Et je serais en face de

Pie X que je ne réussirais sans doute pas à lui donner le moindre sentiment de ce que nous pensons, de ce que nous sommes et de ce que nous ne sommes pas" (LAB, 133). In a postscript, he adds that he has made a plea for their common cause in his letter to Beaudouin: "J'ai laissé entendre que dans le monde philosophique ce n'est pas du tout le néo-Kantisme qui paraîtrait atteint, mais simplement toute philosophie sincère, ne concevant pas gouvernement des idées comme celle d'une troupe de sacristains. (Vous pensez que ce ne sont pas mes expressions)" (LAB, 133).[1] Again, on March 1, Mourret informed Blondel that the rumors spread by the Corriere della Sera lack all foundation. If there should be a condemnation by the Congregation of the Index, Blondel needs only to submit without any retraction. Mourret wrote to Hertzog, the Roman procurator for the Sulpicians, to use his influence in favor of Blondel (BV, 123).

On March 3, Blondel told Mourret that he does not dare to respond directly to Maignen, but that his friend, l'abbé Mallet might publish an explanation in the Revue du clergé français (BV, 155). Laberthonnière told Blondel on March 4, that he expects to publish a refutation of Maignen in the Revue du clergé français in an article entitled, "La légende du kantisme." Fonsegrive and Brunetière, equally accused, have done the same in their respective articles in La Quinzaine and La Revue des Deux-Mondes. Three bishops are supporting Laberthonnière: Boeglin, Bonomelli of Cremona and Bardel of Seez (BV, 124). On the same day, Bricout, the director of RCF refused Laberthonnière's article, and proposed some modifications to avoid any offense to certain influential persons (LAB, 3).

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[1] Historians will ponder over Blondel's motives when he tells Laberthonnière that he is defending their common cause, and yet never mentioned once the name of Laberthonnière in his letter to Beaudouin.

Beaudouin thanked Blondel on March 5 for three copies of History and Dogma, which he read immediately. He gave a copy of this treatise and Blondel's explanatory letter to the secretary of the Congregation of the Index. When Beaudouin read to the latter the passage that Blondel said he wrote with a trembling hand, he was stopped with this comment: "Mais dites-lui donc encore une fois qu'il se rassure!" Blondel should have no fear of the rumors published in the Giornale d'Italia and the Corriere della Sera (BV, 137).

On March 6, Wehrlé expressed to Laberthonnière his disgust over Maignen's articles in La Vérité française, pages filled with stupidity and malevolence which should convince any reader of the failure of an exclusively scholastic frame of mind (LAB, 3).

On March 7, Beaudouin reassures Blondel: "Je ne me sers ni de propositions conditionnelles ni de modales; mais j'affirme catégoriquement et je suis authorisé: vous n'êtes pas à l'Index et on n'instruit pas contre vous à l'Index. Je vous supplie, soyez une troisième fois rassuré, laissez dire et gardez le silence et le secret. Comprenez maintenant pourquoi l'intervention de Son Eminence le Cardinal Perraud avait été jugé inopportune" (BV, 137). It would seem from this letter that Beaudouin obtained some official information in Rome that Blondel would be spared. Blondel informed immediately Mourret of the contents of Beaudouin's reassuring letter (BV, 137,138). He returned also to Wehrlé the copy of Perraud's refutation of Loisy's errors, which he found candid and unintelligent (CCM, 190). In the same letter to Wehrlé, he writes: "Que saint Thomas nous protège contre les thomistes! Vraiment, j'ai une dévotion très confiante en lui, car je ne puis m'empêcher de penser qu'il a mission pour empêcher qu'on abuse de lui!" (BV, 138). Again on March 7, a former Jesuit opponent of Blondel, Le Bachelet wrote to the philosopher concerning the threatening rumors: "Quel dommage que je n'aie pas su plus tôt les nouvelles poursuites dont vous êtes l'objet! J'ai passé à Rome quatre mois, d'octobre à fin janvier: il m'aurait été facile d'obtenir une audience du cardinal préfet de l'Index et de parler franchement à cet homme droit et bon." Le Bachelet, who has been informed of Blondel's danger, promises to send the latter's explanatory letter to the General of the Jesuits who will show it to the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of the Index (see BV, 132). Blondel communicated to Laberthonnière the reassuring news that he has received from Rome, reassuring at least for him, with no mention of Laberthonnière's fate. Blondel wants to find out when Laberthonnière's article, "La légende du Kantisme" and his book Le réalisme chrétien are to be published (LAB, 133).

Laberthonnière answered on March 8. Even though he is condemned and Blondel is spared, at least their common ideas will continue their way. As Bricout refused to publish his article, "La légende du Kantisme," Laberthonnière revised it and sent it to L'Univers. Presently, he is writing the conclusion of his Réalisme chrétien, in a state of mind greatly distressed by the present conflicts (MMd, 41; see BV, 138).[4]

Blondel wrote back on March 9. He has been reassured on his own situation, but he is worried for Laberthonnière for whom he has no news: "Un Oratorien, c'est pis qu'un laîc, [Laberthonnière was a member of the Oratory of Paris] et puis, comme vous le dîtes, vous êtes plus lu, plus lisible que moi, vous êtes en librairie. Veillez donc et prions" (LAB, 133). Blondel fears that many writers want to compromise him with Loisy and hopes that such accusations will not be reproduced in La Vérité française, the organ of the integrists, his arch-enemies.

On March 11, Blondel thanked Mourret for a long document which he plans to use in his next article of self justification. This article was signed by his friend, F. Mallet and presented in the guise of "Un nouvel entretien avec M. Blondel" (See RCF, 38 (1904), 405-416; 513-531). Blondel was grateful to Mourret: "Mon entretien avec M. Mallet sera vôtre plus que sien, plus que mien" (BV, 155). On the same day, Laberthonnière told Blondel that Le Patriote of Brussels has reproduced the rumors of Giornale d'Italia; he fears that their names will be dragged into all the newspapers of Europe. The Giornale d'Italia has apparently associated their names with the rumor of Loisy's excommunication (MMd, 41; see BV, 138). Again on the same day, André Pératé congratulated Blondel for his third article on Tradition: "J'ai goûté pleinement la façon sereine et paisible dont tu montrais à Loisy son insuffisance philosophique (ou si tu préfères, sa suffisance). Cela n'empêche pas ses livres d'être très beaux, et Rome bien cruelle." Concerning the new threats of condemnation, Pératé observes: "Je ne puis le croire; comment renoncer à ce point à toute intelligence du progrès vivant et nécessaire. Il est vrai que la lettre du cardinal Perraud, si elle traduit ce que l'on pense à Rome, ne prouve qu'une chose, c'est que l'on y est incapable de penser. Il est difficile de lire des pages plus vides et plus mortes." The articles on History and Dogma are a kind of preface for

Blondel's projected book on "L'Esprit chrétien." Will the book ever be published, inquires Pératé? He wonders why the Jesuits are so keen to obtain some condemnations (MMd, 71; see BV, 126-127).

On March 13, Blondel wrote to Wehrlé that he received several letters in which he is accused of completing Loisy. Apparently, this will also be the theme of Hügel's next article (BV, 165). On the same day, he wrote to Laberthonnière the reassuring news which he has just received from Fonsegrive. In preference to the term "relativisme" used by both Fonsegrive and Laberthonnière, a term used earlier by Spencer and Hamilton and which might frighten certain conservatives and lead them to suspect idealism and subjectivism, Blondel prefers the term of "inadequation" to express the distance between the subject knowing, the idea, and the object known. Finally, Blondel mentions that he is working with Mallet on a new article (LAB, 133).

On the same day, Laberthonnière wrote to Blondel. Apparently, cardinal Mathieu has assured Fonsegrive and Blondel that they will not be condemned, but has made no specific mention of Laberthonnière. Albert de Mun has begun a campaign to obtain the condemnation of Marc Sangnier, Le Sillon, and anyone fostering democratic ideas (MMd, 41). Again, on the same day, Mourret transmitted to Blondel information which he has received from other Sulpicians in Rome. The Pope wants to condemn two or three more philosophers without discouraging social action. In these circumstances, it would be preferable if Blondel did not stick out his neck, did not speak nor write, and avoid attracting attention. Bishop Amette of Bayeux will intervene; Cardinal Serafino Vannutelli has given assurance that Blondel will be saved; but there is no guarantee for Laberthonnière (BV, 138).

On March 14, Mourret gave to Blondel some news concerning Loisy: "M. Loisy a dit à un de ses amis? 'J'ai écrit au Souverain Pontife une lettre dont j'espère bien qu'il se contentera.' Donc, il serait bien décidé à une formule de soumission. Espérons qu'on évitera la terrible séparation" (CCM, 200). On the same day, Mourret wrote to Laberthonnière. Apparently, Hertzog, the Roman procurator of the Sulpicans, recommends silence if Blondel is to escape condemnation. A trip to Rome is not advisable. Laberthonnière should try to see bishop Amette who is now in Paris. Archbishop Mignot should arrive shortly in Paris and could also intervene (LAB, 3). On the same day, Laberthonnière wrote to Blondel: "Je sais de source certaine qu'il n'y a pas d'excommunication contre Loisy. Ce dernier a, paraît-il, écrit au Pape et aurait dit à ce sujet que le Pape devrait être content de sa lettre. Il est vrai que le Cardinal Richard a reçu une réponse. J'ignore ce qu'elle contient, mais un personnage officiel de l'archevêché assure qu'il ne s'agit pas d'excommunication." Concerning the projected article of Hügel, which Bremond translated into French, Laberthonnière observes: Il y a, paraît-il, que vous completez heureusement Loisy. Cela peut être exact. (Bien qu'il faudrait aussi ajouter que vous le rectifiez considérablement). Mais il faudrait le dire autrement. Ne pourrait-on pas empêcher la publication de cet article, ou au moins en obtenir une modification? Fonsegrive ne le publiera pas. Mais l'abbé Denis ne demandera pas mieux. Que faire?" In a postscript, Laberthonnière mentions that he will try to see Mgr Amette in Paris; his explanatory letter to bishop Bardel has been transmitted to Lepidi at the Congregation of the Index (MMd, 41).

At the beginning of March, Bremond thanked Blondel for a copy of History and Dogma. He was not scandalized by this treatise, as Blondel expected, but rather convinced that Blondel and Loisy complement each other: "Les deux pensées se rejoignent et se complètent nécessairement." Hügel asked Bremond to translate his response to Blondel. The baron has already published several articles in defense of Loisy in the Pilot, Times, and Giornale d'Italia.

Blondel was very offended that Hügel would associate him with Loisy, a condemned man. In his letter to the baron on March 15, he insisted on the distinctions:

> En fait, ni sur la méthode ni sur les conclusions doctrinales, nous ne convergeons. M. L. maintient qu'il y a un terrain où l'historien est absolument chez lui, et c'est même sur ce point qu'il résiste au Saint-Siège. Je ne l'admets pas. ... Dire simplement que je complète M. L., c'est donc, sans servir votre ami, compromettre davantage ce qu'il faut sauver du torrent de réaction qui menace de tout emporter. Et ce qui paraîtrait conforme à la vérité comme à l'habileté, ce serait de dire que mes thèses sont, non pas complémentaires, mais compensatrices, correctrices, ou vaccinatrices pour les siennes. Mon but en effet, quand j'ai écrit mes articles, c'a été d'opérer un triage, d'indiquer les alternatives entre lesquelles il faut opter, de profiter de certaines ambiguïtés pour indiquer de quel côté le sens traditionnel nous conduit (CCM, 216-217).

Blondel marks his disagreements with Loisy on the nature of revelation, the supernatural, the clear consciousness of Christ's divinity, the eucharist, the role of Tradition, and the extra-historical means to arrive at Christian truth. Basically, Blondel does not grant to Loisy that the Christian historian has any independence from the Roman decisions and he refuses to be associated with Loisy at a time when so many threats have been voiced against him. Blondel would prefer if Hügel said that his position is a corrective to that of Loisy and a return to the traditional one. In a postscript, Blondel grants to Loisy what he denied him in the body of the letter: he acknowledges the methodological abstractions that Loisy made, insofar as he was writing as an historian, but observes that these restrictions should not be exclusive of fundamental and traditional theses, which Loisy equally acknowledged.

On March 16, Blondel told Mourret that he would prefer the incomprehensions of Schwalm and Gayraud to the insinuations of Hügel (See CCM, 206). He wrote to Laberthonnière that they no longer need to fear condemnation. He envies Laberthonnière who does not have cousins and uncles to blame him constantly for not writing blunt refutations of Loisy like Perraud and Frémond. Concerning the latter's criticism of Loisy, Blondel observes: "J'ai rarement lu quelque chose de plus déplaisant et de plus faible que ces "Lettres" à M. Loisy, mélasse et vinaigre!" Blondel praises Laberthonnière for his article in L'Univers. Undoubtedly, it was impossible to be too technical in a newspaper. Blondel can imagine two possible objections to Laberthonnière's article: "D'un côté les Kantiens vous diraient que vous dénaturez Kant, en méconnaissant son ambition finale de reconstituer une métaphysique; d'un autre côté, des scholastiques véritables maintiendraient qu'ils ne sont pas dans la lune en cherchant à déterminer d'abord et séparément les conditions objectives de la connaissance et de la certitude." (LAB, 133).

Laberthonnière answered the next day. When he was requested by Mourret, bishop Amette obtained from Lepidi some reassuring news for Fonsegrive and Blondel, but none for Laberthonnière. Amette told Laberthonnière that the latter's priestly character makes him more vulnerable to the disciplinary measures of Rome. Laberthonnière is shocked by this discrimination: "Mais il semble que l'idée ne leur est venue ni aux uns, ni aux autres que je puisse valoir la peine qu'on s'occupe de moi." (MMd, 41). As a matter of fact, the priests involved in the Modernist crisis suffered more than the laymen; for example, Blondel, Hügel, Fonsegrive, and others were spared, while several priests who were even less involved were censured.

On March 18, Blondel clarified his notion of Tradition in response to a few objections of Joseph Segond:

> Je précise ma pensée en trois mots: (1) D'abord je ne considère pas la Tradition comme un élément distinct, encore moins comme un élément proprement scientifique, et réductible absolument aux justifications intellectuelles; mais je la regarde comme la synthèse vivante de toutes les forces spéculatives et ascétiques, historiques et théologiques: "Elle résume en elle, ai-je dit, les données de l'histoire, l'effort de la raison, et les expériences de l'action fidèle." D'où (2) l'on doit convenir que "l'effort de la raison" n'est jamais adéquat à cette synthèse dont il faut montrer seulement qu'elle est légitime, sans prétendre se faire juge de ses assertions; bref, nous ne devons pas supposer que chacun peut se constituer à lui-même sa Tradition ni se justifier tous les actes de l'Eglise; car, même après qu'on a reconnu comme légitime et rationnelle l'autorité générale et permanente de la Tradition catholique, il est ordinaire qu'on ne discerne pas avec une certitude individuelle et immédiate les applications particulières et actuelles de cette autorité. Donc (3), il faut éviter de ramener le fait de la Tradition et les faits qu'elle affirme à nos idées; ce sont nos idées qui doivent se soumettre et se ramener aux faits; car les faits affirmés par l'Autorité de l'Eglise supposent un travail de la raison collective, et ne sont par conséquent point justifiables de la seule raison individuelle. -- Vous me demandez où s'arrêtera l'interprétation symbolique ... ce n'est ni à moi-- ni à vous de l'arrêter; les savants, individuellement, proposent, c'est là l'Ecclesia discens; le tassement s'opère, et finalement l'Ecclesia docens, opérant le triage, discerne

> les aspects nouveaux de l'antique et fondamentale vérité (CCM, 201-202).

For Blondel, Tradition represents the whole life of the Church, the summary of historical studies, speculation, and practical living. No individual scholar can ever give an adequate rational justification for the mode of operation of the Church because it is the result of God's action and of collective reasoning of all Christians. Whatever scholars might propose in conclusion to their studies, it is left to the Magisterium of the Church to sift out what is viable. Consequently, Blondel submits all scholarly work to the judement of the Church.

On the same day, March 18, Blondel wrote a letter of gratitude to bishop Lacroix who had previously expressed his sympathy when he heard the rumors concerning a possible condemnation. Blondel is still pessimist over the religious crisis in France and hopes that the wise example of bishop Lacroix will be followed (LAC, 24401).

On March 19, Hügel explained to Blondel the main lines of his response to History and Dogma: "Je crois que vous comprenez fort peu Loisy. On ne comprend bien que ce pour quoi l'on a une sympathie plus ou moins instinctive. Vous ne l'avez pas cette sympathie. Ce n'est nullement un péché: mais enfin vous montrez bien les conséquences d'un tel manque. Je crois aussi que, tout à fait en dehors de lui, vous n'arrivez point à une idée intérieure et de contact sympathique quant à l'esprit,

au caractère, à la fonction de l'étude du contingent et du relatif" (CCM, 218). In sum, according to Hügel, Blondel has neither any sympathy for, nor any understanding of the methodology of the historian. Consequently, he cannot understand Loisy's study of the relative elements in history and would prefer the eternal aspects of dogma. Hügel was delighted with certain pages of History and Dogma. He still considers Blondel as an intimate friend; but in this time of crisis, he feels the need to come to the defense of Loisy, his other close friend, whom many have abandoned (CCM, 217-218).

On March 22, Wehrlé expressed his appreciation to Blondel for taking an independent attitude with respect to the apologetical problems. It would be prudent, however, not to grant anything to Loisy: "Je ne voudrais pas, quant à moi, qu'on en pût conclure que vous acceptez, je ne dis pas les conclusions doctrinaires suspectes mais même les affirmations philologiques et historiques de M. Loisy et autres, sans réserves formelles." (CCM, 202).

On March 25, archbishop Mignot wrote to Hügel his impressions of the religious crisis centered around Loisy:

> Ce que veulent les adversaires, c'est moins la condamnation de la personne de M. Loisy que la condamnation, en sa personne, de la critique biblique. Mais les idées ont fait trop de chemin pour qu'il soit possible de les arrêter. Comme vous le disiez fort bien dans votre lettre au Times en réponse à Catholicus [Father Fleming, consultant to the Holy Office and secretary of the Biblical Commission], il faut savoir gré à M. Loisy d'avoir, par

> son martyre, obtenu droit de cité pour des idées qui lui avaient valu son renvoi de l'Institut Catholique (*HDC*, 477).

If only Loisy had been more patient, writes Mignot, he would have spared himself much suffering from the opposition of the conservatives.

On March 27, Blondel told Valensin that *History and Dogma* was getting a favorable reception from theologians while Hügel was preparing a response and a defense of historicism. (*BV*, 136-137). On the same day, Blondel wrote to Hügel that he would appreciate criticism from him more than from anyone else. But he wants to correct certain of Hügel's impressions. He says that he never feared to be compromised by Hügel, nor is he without sympathy for Loisy: "Pour la personne, comme pour une grande partie de l'oeuvre, j'éprouve un sentiment d'admiration qui me rend plus douloureuse l'impression de ce que je considère comme des erreurs adventices et des tares partielles." It is quite possible that he misunderstood Loisy and hopes that Hügel will correct some of his misunderstandings. But one thing is certain: as he never attacked directly Loisy, he should not be personally involved in a refutation: "Il serait inique, inversement, de s'en prendre à moi, comme si je m'en étais pris à M. Loisy lui-même: la seule allusion directe que j'aie faite (p. 41), ç'a été pour citer de lui des phrases qui contredisent mes reproches et qui prouvent que 'l'historicisme' n'est pas le 'loisysme.'" (*CCM*, 219) In response to

Hügel's criticism that he does not take seriously enough the critical problems involved in the analysis of scriptural texts, Blondel answers that he is concerned with facts, with all the explicit declarations of the Fathers of the Church, the councils, the Popes, and the saints, and that he adapts and submits himself to the present directives of the Church. Blondel believes that the traditional and official teaching of the Church is opposed to Hügel's understanding of christology.

Hügel answered on March 31: "Je ne me retrouve point dans votre description de ma christologie ... Mais je me résigne à trouver tel philosophe de l'immanence plus absolu en ces matières que bon nombre des dénonciateurs de cette philosophie" (HDC, 575).

On March 28, Valensin wrote to Blondel that he tried to reconcile several other Jesuits with the latter's ideas. Concerning History and Dogma, Valensin offers a few observations. He does not want to identify the extrinsicism criticized by Blondel with the traditional method of the Church, as Maignen saw it; he is sure, on the other hand, that the criticism of historicism will please most theologians. Concerning the third article on Tradition, Valensin asks for some clarification: "Vous présentez l'Action comme l'intermédiaire de la Révélation. Dans quel sens?" He hopes that Blondel does not want to substitute action for knowledge. Undoubtedly, as a philosopher, Blondel searches for the natural foundations of the implicit knowledge with which the theologians are concerned. Whatever one does, he must know it implicitly. Consequently, there should be no opposition between the philosophy of L'Action and traditional theology (BV, 141-145).

On March 29, Blondel told Mourret that he has been flooded with letters since his publication of History and Dogma: some wished that Blondel would be as clear in his criticism of Loisy as Frémond and Perraud; others have mistakenly identified extrinsicism with subjectivism; the friends of Loisy are dissatisfied; Hügel declared that Blondel lacks the historical sense, which the latter grants (CCM, 205-206). Blondel adds that his friend, Mallet, has taken the responsibility of publishing in the Revue du clergé an interview in which he hopes to clear the accusations of heterodoxy and prove his orthodoxy without risking a direct confrontation with his opponents (BV, 155). Wehrlé consoled Blondel, on March 29, on his lack of the historical sense: "Vous me paraissiez plus sensible aux idées et à la vie intérieure du christianisme qu'à l'aspect social et à l'organisation eclésiastique du fait chrétien" (CCM, 218).

On March 30, Blondel reported to Laberthonnière that Hügel criticized his lack of historical sense and his misunderstanding of Loisy. Blondel mentions that his article of justification will result from a cooperative effort, not only with

Mallet, whose signature will appear at the bottom of it, but also with Mourret, Wehrlé, and another seminary professor, all supplying valuable texts from Catholic tradition (LAB, 133).

On April 15, 1904, there appeared the first of two articles entitled, "Un nouvel entretien avec M. Blondel," signed by F. Mallet (RCF, 38 (1904), 405-416; 513-531). It was preceded by a letter addressed to Bricout, the editor, in which Blondel rejects the insinuation that Loisy has borrowed from him the notion of miracle.[1] This is followed by a long dialogue between Mallet and Blondel. Mallet asks what was Blondel's intention for intervening in the controversies surrounding the publication of Loisy's famous little red books. Blondel answers that he wanted to refute the legend of his so-called Kantism and to explain the origin of the method of immanence. He does not deny the legitimacy of history, "à la bonne française," when it is written with common sense, nor the relative autonomy of technical history. He tried to avoid the premature conclusions of the scholastic realists, as well as the abstract exclusions of the scientific historians. He tried to relate Tradition as much to moral theology as to speculative theology: "Montrer que dans la foi le passage de l'implicite à l'explicite se fait grâce à l'action fidèle autant que par la méditation intellectuelle." It is by means of this living and doctrinal Tradition that historical facts are related to dogmatic assertions. Blondel believes that such a view is supported by Scripture, conciliar texts, theologians, and doctors of the Church. If some recent theologians were astonished, it was because they are inclined to identify Tradition exclusively with the oral transmission of revelation, while the council of Nicaea spoke of written and unwritten tradition. According to Blondel, Tradition is neither exclusively oral, nor limited to thoughts expressed by Jesus or dictated to the apostles by the Holy Spirit; it includes also the various practices, rites, and precepts transmitted by the Church. Blondel is opposed to the notion that revelation has stopped with the death of the last apostle, as if God opened for a brief moment the locks of revelation and closed it immediately after the passage of a certain quantity. When Mallet objects to Blondel's dismissal of the customary view of revelation, the latter proposes a distinction. Certainly, the teaching of Christ was complete and perfect in itself; but, for us, this revelation needs to be progressively taught, understood, and assimilated. The notions of development and growth are essential to faith, as well as they are incorporated in the official texts of the Church. Not all the Catholic dogmas were explicitly formulated by the Apostles. Otherwise, how could we explain the fact that St.

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[1] See F. Rodé, Le miracle dans la controverse moderniste (Paris: Beauchesne, 1965).

Thomas argued against the Immaculate Conception which was defined in 1854, and Suarez argued against papal infallibility defined in 1870? Since revelation is not to be compared with an inert diamond, but rather with a living and fertile seed, it implies an unlimited growth. It is not limited to speculative truths, but includes practical precepts. The development of doctrine is explained neither by logic, nor by dialectic, but by the faithful practice of the whole Christian life in union with the whole Church:

> Les définitions dogmatiques sortent du dépôt de la Révélation, non parce qu''une tradition orale ou écrite en a relié extérieurement toutes les formules, mais parce qu'une tradition vitale de foi et de pensée en a perpétué intimement la présence réelle; c'est cette pensée chrétienne qui, en vivant de la foi intégrale, pénètre toujours davantage les convenances intérieures et les richesses inépuisables du trésor naturel (p. 516).

According to Blondel, it is wrong to view human action deprived of thought or to limit oneself to theoretical considerations without pointing to their practical applications. A doctrinal tradition cannot be understood apart from an ascetic tradition. The precepts prescribed in the Church are no less important than the dogmas: "La foi-confiance est toujours unie à la foi-croyance et le Royaume est promis non pas tant à un pur conformisme intellectuel qu'à l'amour clairvoyant et agissant" (p.522). It is essential to link dogmatic knowledge, which is always perfectible, to Christian living which does not need an explicit science to be perfect. Undoubtedly, religious truth cannot be separated from historical realities, and piety is not genuine unless it is controlled by authority. The role of Tradition is to link the three basic laws: lex credendi, lex orandi, lex agendi. "Le christianisme n'est-il pas indivisiblement: dogme fondé sur la réalité divine, histoire véritable du Christ, vie complète de l'homme? C'est à cette triple lumière qu'il faut s'éclairer en l'étudiant: à se pénétrer ainsi du Vivere Christus est" (p. 523).

Since Blondel has identified Tradition with the whole life of the Church, Mallet wonders how the unbeliever can accept it as a means of linking history to dogma. Blondel recognizes that it is for the believer alone that Tradition possesses a guarantee superior to historical reasoning. As Tradition summarizes the data of history, the efforts of reason, and the accumulated experiences of faithful action with the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit, no individual judgment is final and no one can determine for himself his own Tradition, apart from the judgment of the Church which is final and infallible.

The historian observes at this point that Blondel began his treatise, History and Dogma, with the intention of finding a scientific method for linking facts with ideas, history with dogma. After a long period of controversies and explanations, he finally goes back to the traditional position of the theologians. He concludes that only one who lives in union with the Church, only one who submits to the infallible Magisterium of the Church can discover how history is reconciled with dogma. It is not by a scientific method, but only on the basis of the Roman Catholic faith that he solved this problem. He proved his orthodoxy, but did not discover the scientific method he was searching for. He criticized the historians and leaned towards the scholastic theologians.

On June 1, 1904, Hügel published his response to History and Dogma, in an article entitled, "Du Christ éternel et de nos christologies successives," which was translated in French by Henri Bremond (see La Quinzaine, 58 (1904), 285-312). Hügel deplores that his friend, Blondel, refuses to follow him in the field of critical studies. His article is divided in three sections: (1) a description of the normal spiritual activity and progress which needs to surmount difficulties and contradictions; (2) a description of the normal process of Christian faith which overcomes the apparent contradictions between historical facts and dogmatic formulations; (3) a criticism of Blondel's solution.

According to Hügel, the mind oscillates between the phenomena and the noumena: "Entre ces deux séries, entre le phénomène saisi, et le noumène deviné, il y a forcément conflit, frottement, et dans notre désir d'arriver plus vite à l'unité, à la paix, nous sommes tentés de simplifier ce qui est complexe, d'identifier le dehors et le dedans et d'établir en nous une unité prématurée" (p. 287). It is wiser to acknowledge certain contradictions and to work for their solution. Christian faith transcends historical facts, but it cannot bypass them. The act of faith is not produced automatically by the evidence of historical phenonema, but by the grace of God. Once a man makes an act of faith, with the help of grace and at the occasion of an historical event, he has a tendency to combine the historical phenomena with the interpretation that faith allows to give to them. "Cependant, en toute candeur, il devra reconnaître que les phénomènes historiques n'ont pu, par eux-mêmes, déterminer cet acte de foi--et que l'acte de foi posé, les faits en eux-mêmes n'en restent pas moins ce qu'ils étaient auparavant. Il n'est pas besoin de croire pour atteindre à ces phénomènes, et le simple fait de les atteindre ne suffit pas à produire la foi" (p. 292).

If men have believed in Christ, it is not only because they have witnessed miracles or marvelled at coincidences, but because they have recognized how Christ answered the profound aspirations which he had given them. The Christian believer is always tempted to confuse the interpretation given by faith with history and to overlook the phenomenal description of critical history:

> Intéressé avant tout aux anecdotes, au détail des événements, l'historien s'immobilise devant le portrait que

> nous tracent les synoptiques, mais le chrétien vivant va droit à l'autre portrait, à celui du 4e évangile qui résume et incarne la vérité, la signification spirituelle de ces apparences. Même quand il lit les synoptiques, le croyant voit se lever devant lui le Christ de saint Jean (p. 295).

The believer tends to prefer the Johannine Christ to the Synoptic Christ because he seems more spiritual. In doing so, he denies the plan of the Incarnation; he disregards the need of material objects before man can rise to the spiritual. Furthermore, religion should not monopolize and absorb scientific activities. However essential it is to life, religion does not exhaust all the human activities. A too easy reconciliation between science and religion can result in the elimination of the autonomy of science and of the heteronomy of religion. Christ is certainly the same person who lived in Palestine nineteen centuries ago and now acts within the Church; but there is a distinction of states: "Quand j'adore le Christ présent dans l'Eucharistie, ou agissant dans l'Eglise et dans mon coeur, ce Christ est bien identique avec le Jésus qui agonisa au Jardin et qui mourut sur la croix dans une mystérieuse détresse. C'est bien la même personne, ce n'est plus le même état" (p. 302). When it is a matter of understanding the historical and terrestrial life of Jesus, it would be a fideist folly to neglect the methods of critical history; when there is need of considering the celestial and eternal reality of Christ, only a proud rationalism and a presumptuous individualism would neglect the successive doctrinal definitions of the Church. The root for these definitions, according to Hügel, is the social tradition of Christian experience.

Hügel feels that Blondel does not distinguish sufficiently between the historian's phenomenal description of events and the believer's noumenal spiritual interpretation:

> M. Blondel ne sait ou ne veut pas distinguer suffisamment entre les phénomènes historiques et leur signification spirituelle. Les première relèvent directement de l'historien, et M. Blondel admet autant que personne et répète que ces données phenoménales ne sauraient être que l'occasion, la matière seconde de l'acte de foi. L'objet direct de cette vertu, c'est la substance spirituelle cachée sous ces phénomènes, c'est un sens auquel ils donnent un corps. Mais, de ce chef, M. Loisy tient, aussi fermement que M. Blondel que la critique à elle seule ne démontre jamais l'existence de ces réalités spirituelles (p. 305).

According to Hügel, Blondel cannot reconcile the historian's acknowledgement that history alone cannot prove the existence of supernatural realities with the critic's exclusion of any interpretation incompatible with historical truth.

Hügel lists four points on which he disagrees with Blondel. Blondel wrote earlier that it is an error of methodology to combine too hastily the conclusions of one science with those of another, but he now requires the historian of Christianity to proceed only with a theological viewpoint. Blondel also confuses the knowledge of the eternal Christ acquired through mystical experience with the knowledge of the terrestrial life of Jesus acquired through critical studies. While Blondel separates radically Christian religion from all other religions, Hügel finds in other religions some rudimentary stages for the knowledge and love of God which God himself nurtured within the whole human race. Finally, Blondel forgets a distinction so familiar to saint Paul between the terrestrial state and the celestial state of Christ. According to Hügel, the perfect, continuous, direct, and explicit consciousness that Jesus would have had of his divinity is a mystery which transcends the capacity of investigation of critical studies.

In conclusion, Hügel recalls the distinction between historical phenomena subject to critical investigation and the spiritual reality communicated to faith through these phenomena. The Church exercises only an indirect and negative control over historical studies, while its jurisdiction is direct and positive in the interpretation of the spiritual reality which transcends the phenomena. Both the Church and each individual Christian soul grasp the unity of this double level of truth. But this unity presupposes a diversity of approach. It would be disastrous if the scholars forgot the approach of faith. It is equally disastrous when the believer rejects the point of view of the critical scholar and concludes to a premature unity. This latter error is that of Blondel, according to Hügel, who concludes:

> C'est, il me semble, d'ici et de là, l'illusion et la méprise du profond et délicat philosophe de la vie intérieure auquel je me suis permis de répondre. J'espère de toute

> mon âme que le dissentiment n'est qu'à la surface; que mes deux amis, celui de Bellevue et celui d'Aix, le critique et le philosophe, que nous tous, qui, chacun de notre façon, voulons travailler pour et avec l'Eglise, nous essaierons de respecter chaque jour davantage les droits respectifs de ces deux éléments divers qui doivent et se combiner et s'harmoniser dans l'unité de toute vie spirituelle (p. 312).

Finally, Hügel expressed hope for an eventual reconciliation between Blondel and Loisy. This expression of hope was perhaps not welcome when Loisy was completely discredited within Roman Catholic circles and when Blondel was striving against all kinds of odds to prove his orthodoxy.

Blondel's reaction to Hügel's article was that of a wounded man who tries to ward off the blows by further distinctions and objections (see CCM, 222). On June 3, he wrote to Laberthonnière that he is as much opposed to docetism as to nestorianism for the solution of the christological problem. He finds that solution in charity: "Je crois c'est dans la charité et par la charité qu'il faut chercher le secret de la consistance humaine du divin Sauveur; et dès lors je ne puis la voir dans l'inconscience et l'inconsistance d'un Christ si terrestre qu'il est 'contraire,' incommensurable au 'Christ céleste'" (BL, 176). While Hügel is concerned with the scholarly reconciliation between the historical picture given by the Synoptics and that given by the fourth Gospel, Blondel is concerned with the spiritual reconciliation effected by charity in the heart of the faithful. Hügel is concerned with the scientific methodology of the historian; Blondel, with the orthodoxy of Christian faith. It would seem that, without realizing it, Blondel is falling in the extreme of extrinsicism by trying to impose on the critical historian certain dogmatic conclusions before an extensive analysis of the scriptural texts.

Rather than personally answering Hügel's article, Blondel encouraged Wehrlé to refute the "historicist" Hügel, instead of refuting the "extrinsicist" Gayraud, as he was preparing to do: "Qui sait si votre intervention ne sera pas plus utile contre l'article de Hügel-Bremond? Car cette fois vous auriez à défendre le Christ, et non plus à protester, périlleussement pour vous, contre ceux qui prétendent représenter sa doctrine officielle! Et vous pourriez aussi commenter le 'réalisme chrétien' contre cet historicisme mystique" (BV, 180).

On June 3, Blondel encouraged again Wehrlé (BV, 180 and CCM, 225). On the same day Mourret expressed his agreement on the need to refute Hügel. Blondel was glad to receive such sympathy. While Laberthonnière showed some sympathy for Hügel and Wehrlé's reaction was severe, Blondel would incline towards severity because he believes that Hügel's article represented a complete perversion of Christianity (CCM, 225-226).

On June 5, Wehrlé asked Blondel's cooperation for his response to Hügel: "Je suis prêtre, et on touche au coeur même de l'Eglise...Vous me servirez beaucoup, mais je serai moi, ou _je_ _ne_ _serai_ _pas_" (_CCM_, 225). On June 6, Blondel told Mourret his joy that Wehrlé has decided to refute Hügel, "non pour moi, car il ne s'agirait pas de me défendre puisque je n'ai pas été discuté et attaqué, mais pour Notre-Seigneur et pour les âmes que cette piété trop céleste risque de préparer aux chutes trop terrestres" (_CCM_, 230). As a priest, Wehrlé would be more qualified than a layman to speak in the name of the Church: "Il a, plus que des laïcs comme M. de Hügel ou comme moi, le droit, le devoir d'exposer et de défendre la Doctrine." If one day Wehrlé is to develop a sympathy for the reformers of intellectual life within the Church, he should now establish his standing among the traditionalists. Blondel has one preoccupation: "La pensée de M. de Hügel me semble funeste; j'ai été l'occasion de cet article; je désire donc extrêment le voir rétorqué; et j'estime qu'un autre que moi peut le faire plus utilement; j'estime que M. Wehrlé le fera plus nettement, plus décisivement que personne" (_CCM_, 230). The refutation of Hügel was the result of a cooperative effort between Blondel, Mallet, Landry, and Mourret who all sent their observations to Wehrlé for his article.

On June 7, Wehrlé showed to Laberthonnière the notes Blondel took during his reading of Hügel's article; he requested that these notes be transmitted to Mourret. Then he adds: "Il est question que j'assume la tâche de répondre au Baron de Hügel:

J'y suis du moins pressé par Blondel et encouragé par M. Mourret" (LAB, 3). On June 8, Mourret told Blondel the title that Wehrlé chose for his refutation of Hügel: "Le Christ et la conscience catholique" (BV, 181). On June 9, Blondel told Wehrlé that he asked Fonsegrive to provide space for his article in La Quinzaine and begs the latter to abstain from any editorial comment (BV, 181). Blondel continues to encourage Wehrlé: "Personne mieux que vous, ne peut porter son témoignage au Christ réel, condition et terme de cette christologie une et progressive qu'il faut opposer nettement à cet hyper-Christ perdu dans les nues et à ces hypochristologies s'ensevelissant les unes sous les autres, dans les ossuaires de la fausse science" (CCM, 231). Blondel promises to send his own observations as well as those of his correspondents. On the 12, Wehrlé mentioned to Blondel that he has discovered four major flaws in Hügel's article:

> L'article du baron est pour moi une vaste anacoluthe. J'y relève au moins quatre solutions de continuité irrémédiables: (1) entre la réalité profonde et les phénomènes; (2) entre les trois Synoptiques et le IVe Evangile; (3) entre la divinité de Jésus et son humanité; (4) entre le Christ temporel et le Christ définitivement constitué in aeternum dans sa gloire (CCM, 231).

Where Hügel spoke of distinctions, Wehrlé saw insoluble separations.

The main problem for Blondel is that of Christ's consciousness of his divinity. On July 11 and 12, he sent to

Wehrlé two long letters.[1] Concerning the divinity of Christ, Blondel writes: "J'estime nécessaire de maintenir, selon la foi traditionnelle, que Jésus a eu conscience de 'descendre du ciel, et que l'Ascension présuppose cette 'condescendance,' comme l'Incarnation virginale, comme la Rédemption..., comme peut-être la Création elle-même; et que, sans cette vue, l'ordre surnaturel, peut-être même l'ordre naturel reste inexplicable et perd toute signification, toute réalité" (CCM, 237). Concerning the Incarnation, he writes: "Jèsus s'est fait homme; il n'a pas été fait homme, il s'est fait homme, avec tout ce que cette exinanition entraîne de conditions humbles et assujetissantes. Il a épousé nos infirmités, nos défaillances, nos inconsciences, au point de les éprouver comme siennes" (CCM, 237). Blondel is so concerned to maintain the unity of person in Christ that he attributes to the eternal Word of God the name of Jesus that Christian tradition reserved for his temporal manifestation. In a postscript, Blondel adds:

> Mon Panchristisme interviendrait non seulement pour permettre de comprendre comment Jésus est la conscience de nos inconsciences, la grâce prévenante dans l'ordre

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[1] These two letters were published both in Au Coeur de la Crise moderniste and Lettres philosophiques de Maurice Blondel, but with some significant differences. The first letter contained a paragraph omitted in LP, while the postscript was omitted in CCM. The second letter is minus a paragraph and a postscript in LP.

> de la surnature comme la lumière évocatrice dans l'ordre même de la raison, mais encore comment il est et reste le solidificateur éternel de notre personnalité, l'explicite de notre science, la vie de notre vie éternelle, le foyer subsistant de notre individualité au sein de l'absolu et de l'universel. Et pour épuiser la question des rapports de la conscience et de la personnalité, il faudrait sans doute méditer le mystère de la Tripersonnalité dans l'Unité substantielle de l'Etre tout étant, tout sachant, tout aimant" (LP, 235).

Blondel's christology ~~was~~ more a product of his speculative mysticism than a reflection of Christian tradition.

In his letter of July 12, Blondel wrote: "Il faut maintenir la coexistence, dans la conscience, de l'explicite et de l'implicite, du Créateur et de la création, de l'Action toute puissante et de la Passion universelle et totale: le mystère de l'Union hypostatique est précisément là; et si on refuse de croire à ce mystère, on ne croit pas à l'Incarnation positive, on n'est pas catholique" (CCM, 238). Jesus did not strive during his life to know his Father, but to wed humanity and to fulfill the crucifying work of love in the midst of deicidal hatred. He made no effort to acquire the consciousness of his divinity, but rather to forget it, to absorb it, to annihilate it in that nothingness which he penetrated and re-created through the diffusion of his breath and blood. After he explained the various meanings of the words consciousness and personality, Blondel notes:

> La personnalité psychologiquement humaine de Jésus et sa conscience terrestre se profilaient, non comme chez nous

> sur une personnalité ontologiquement humaine et sur une conscience explicitable quoique inexplicitée, mais sur la personne divine et la conscience absolue du Fils de Dieu; et...entre ces deux consciences, la réalité de nos états conscients et subconscients, de nos inadéquations et de nos obscurités humaines servait à sauvegarder la vérité du Fils de l'Homme, et à maintenir dans sa conscience une, l'obnubilation qui permet à la créature de subsister devant ou dans le créateur, sans être pénétrée, sublimée, par ses rayons (CCM, 240).

According to Blondel, Jesus, as a divine person, did not assume only a human nature, but the human nature. Christ identifies himself with the consciousness of each human person. Blondel is much less concerned with the humanity of Christ, than he is with his divinity: "Il est homme, oui; mais le souci de préciser la vérité de cette humanité est accessoire, comme est subsumée cette nature humaine à la divinité essentielle. Inverser cela, c'est sortir inévitablement et définitivement du Christianisme. Jésus est plus Dieu qu'homme, si l'on peut dire, puisque sa personne est divine et non humaine" (CCM, 241). In a postscript, Blondel recognizes that he is unable to formulate clearly his thought and that he has just proposed groping observations. The solution of this problem does not depend on logic, but on love.

When Wehrlé finished his article, he sent it to Blondel who approved it and found in it only light, kindness, and energy. The philosopher of Aix qualifies Wehrlé as a philologist, a philosopher, a theologian, a Christian, and a remarkable priest (CCM, 242). According to Mourret, God himself has helped his defender. He approves all that Wehrlé wrote, he admires everything and shares the whole responsibility (CCM, 242).

Wehrlé's article, "Le Christ et la conscience catholique," was published on August 16, 1904 (La Quinzaine, 59 (1904), 421-447). The major conflict between the philologist Hügel and the philosopher Blondel, according to Wehrlé, concerns the keystone of the whole Catholic edifice. Even though he is neither a philosopher, nor a critic, not even a professional theologian, Wehrlé mentions his two titles to intervene in the controversy. As a priest, he was commissioned officially by the Church for fifteen years to the ministry of souls; secondly during that time he accumulated and coordinated the always consonant echos of a great number of Catholic consciences. In view of the existence of a major controversy among Catholics, it seems odd for Wehrlé to speak of a universal consensus. His article is divided in four sections: (1) he wants to show what strange christology would result from the premises of Hügel if an objective logic, independent of the personal intentions of the baron, were used to reach conclusions; (2) he examines the nature and value of the "faulty" christology secretly implied to Hügel's article; (3) he tries to show the rigorously orthodox christology by means of authority and reason; (4) he tries to solve the personal question of Blondel.

First, Wehrlé says that he is not much interested in the personal christology of Hügel, because he does not want to begin a religious inquisition. He is more interested in the intrinsic logic of the baron's formulae and their immanent dynamism. In reference to Hügel's title, "Du Christ éternel et nos christologies successives," Wehrlé observes that Christ, as the Incarnate Word, encompasses all time and cannot be said to be eternal only. Furthermore, he believes that it is wrong to speak of successive christologies, for he believes that the Church never had but one christology early defined and dogmatically formulated. Wehrlé pinpoints several expressions of Hügel which may sound ambiguous if understood in various contexts. He then reduces Hügel's distinction between the historical and the eternal Christ in this fashion:

> Le Christ éternel est la propriété de la critique qui laisse à l'Eglise la propriété du Christ céleste. La critique peut s'exercer sans réserve et sans contrôle...L'Eglise retient la faculté de disserter sur le thème de la vie céleste...Et le suprême résultat de cette distribution des rôles, c'est que le Christ terrestre étant seul objet de connaissance humaine et scientifique, et le Christ céleste étant seul objet de croyance proprement religieuse, la foi catholique porte en fin de compte sur un Christ qui est l'"antithèse" de Celui-là seul dont nous pouvons faire la preuve et contrôler les démarches. Bref, la croyance surnaturelle n'a plus ici-bas de fondement véritable: elle est suspendue toute à une réalité impalpable courageusement affirmée par l'heureux visionnaire (p. 428).

Where Hügel made a distinction between the scientific work of the biblical exegete and the act of the Christian believer, Wehrlé sees a separation. Where Hügel spoke of a difference between the temporal and the eternal states of the same and unique Christ, Wehrlé speaks of "antithesis." According to Wehrlé, the essential defect of Hügel's christology is found in these words: "L'Incarnation de Dieu...en Jésus de Nazareth," which implies in his mind the preexistence of a human person and the progressive divinization of a human person. Where Hügel was concerned with the historical development of christology through the Synoptics and the fourth Gospel, Wehrlé begins with a dogmatic and well developed christology.

Secondly, Wehrlé attributes Hügel's antithesis between the terrestrial and celestial Christ to his distinction between the Synoptics and the fourth Gospel, understood as a distinction between an historical presentation and a mystical elaboration. Wehrlé prefers to combine both the phenomenal description of the Synoptics and the noumenal reality of the fourth Gospel. In contrast to Hügel's presumed Kantian dichotomy, Wehrlé proposes unwittingly a position which borders on the historicist identification of the phenomenological description with the noumenal reality:

> Nous ne devons pas 'traverser' les faits pour trouver par derrière autre chose que les faits. Nous devons les pénétrer pour en saisir la réalité, cachée sans doute, mais positive, mais présente, mais incluse en eux et par eux directement agissante sur nous. C'est aux faits eux-mêmes que nous devons adhérer, c'est à eux que nous devons nous arrêter, c'est en eux que nous devons nous reposer, et c'est eux enfin que nous devons adorer parce qu'ils sont immédiatement adorables, n'étant, sans solution de continuité aucune, que la manifestation "de la substance des choses qui n'apparaissent pas" aux yeux de la chair (p. 437).

According to Wehrlé, Hügel's philosophic mentality derives from the Kantian dichotomy between the phenomena and the noumena; it is either a bi-ontologism or a bi-phenomenism; either way, it is an absolute relativism, influenced by Berkeley for whom "their esse is percipi" and can only lead to the agnosticism of Spencer. Although he acknowledged earlier that he was no professional philosopher, Wehrlé pointed here to numerous philosophic influences on Hügel. In truth, he transfers to Hügel the accusations which neoscholastic theologians voiced against Blondel.

Thirdly, Wehrlé declares that,with a trembling hand, he is coming to the description of the only "orthodox" christology, to the "mystère de l'Emmanuel, qui a fait communier ensemble dans un même être l'Infini et le fini, le Créateur et la créature, Dieu et l'homme." He recalls that according to Vatican I, not only the solemn definitions of Popes and councils, but also the ordinary and universal magisterium of the Church is guaranteed by infallibility. At the beginning of his article, he presented himself as a spokesman for the ordinary magisterium of the Church. He recalls that according to Christian tradition, the incarnation is conceived as a downward movement of God coming to man, rather ~~than~~ an upward movement of man elevating himself to God. He mentions Newman as an authorized historian according to whom the school of Antioch was responsible for all the christological errors, while the school of Alexandria produced the orthodox formula. Since there is only one person in Christ, and that person is divine, it would be erroneous, according to Wehrlé, to imagine Jesus as having been unconscious of his divinity. Once again, Wehrlé defends the dogmatic approach of traditional christology, while Hügel was concerned with the critical problem of biblical exegesis. According to Wehrlé, the historical method is insufficient to solve the christological problem; that was never denied by Loisy or Hügel. "C'est donc dans les Ecritures inspirées par l'Esprit de Dieu et dans la Tradition éclairée et soutenue par l'Esprit de Dieu qu'il faut chercher la solution du problème. L'inspiration des saintes Lettres et le principe surnaturel de la Tradition ne sont donc pas seulement des vérités de foi; à ne considérer le christianisme que comme une hypothèse, elles se présentent à nous comme un postulat rationnel qui est la condition même de son existence. Le mot de l'enigme est là." (p. 444). Wehrlé believes that he has thus solved the conflict between dogma and history, between faith and reason. First of all, the solution of the problem is possible only by means of Scripture and Tradition, respectively inspired and assisted by God. If a philosopher should consider Christianity as an hypothesis, Wehrlé believes that such a philosopher could only conclude to the truth of Christianity. The inspiration of Scriptures and the supernatural principle of

Tradition are not only truths of faith, but rational hypotheses. Consequently, faith and reason can meet on a common ground.

Finally, in defense of Blondel, Wehrlé holds that Hügel's article was a demonstration of the historicism criticized by the philosopher of Aix. There is a complete disagreement between Blondel and Hügel: the former marks a living continuity between the noumena and the phenomena, while the latter establishes an abyss between them; therefore, Hügel and not Blondel, is a Kantian. The christology of Hügel is incompatible with that of Blondel, which is the orthodox one. Wehrlé concludes:

> M. Maurice Blondel montre par quelle voie tous les hommes peuvent et doivent aboutir à l'Eglise sans demander pour cela à l'Eglise de renoncer à aucun article de son dogme ni à aucun droit de son magistère divin...Si la solution équitable des difficultés pendantes est quelque part, je crois l'apercevoir dans l'orientation marquée par M. Blondel. C'est parce qu'il reste en continuité parfaite avec le passé qu'il me semble avoir réellement trouvé la clef de l'avenir (p. 447).

On August 26, Blondel expressed to Laberthonnière his feelings of depression at the sight of an atmosphere of violent reactions:

> Le Poids qui m'étouffe aussi, c'est celui dont vous sentez l'accablement, l'écrasant fardeau des inintelligences et des violences qui provoquent, qui préparent les guerres civiles et religieuses. Exactement comme vous, je souffre de ce servilisme courtisanesque qui paraît à beaucoup la mesure même de l'orthodoxie et de la condition du salut; comme si on ne pouvait avoir un dévouement absolu, une soumission effective et un attachement héroïque, tout en gardant la clairvoyance et l'indépendance qui semblent constituer un droit et même un devoir pour la conscience humaine" (BL, 179).

Blondel mentions then that he was accused by Wehrlé of Protestant individualism, exclusive anti-intellectualism, and subtle anti-clericalism. He wants to remain faithful to the Church, but he cannot identify the attitude of certain ecclesiastics with the Church itself. Too much clericalism induces an infantile attitude on the part of the laymen: "Je demande, s'il n'y a que des enfants dans l'*Ecclesia discens*, comment l'*Ecclesia docens* se recrutera elle-même et sortira de la juvénilité philosophique, de l'inexpérience humaine dont il semble qu'elle ait intérêt à se défier" (*BL*, 181). When he engaged in a debate with Wehrlé, he was concerned with the fate of those hundreds of millions of human beings who never encounter Revelation. He thought that Redemption was indispensable for salvation, while Revelation, being limited, coult not be the only means for coming in contact with Redemption. But he never rejected the necessity of Revelation: "Au reste je crois qu'en voulant trop opposer Révélation et Rédemption, Eglise visible et Corps mystique du Christ, nous ne tombions dans des abstractions chimériques et périlleuses" (*BL*, 183). Blondel discusses then Wehrlé's article in *La Quinzaine*. Within ecclesiastical circles, he says, the first three sections of the article will be greatly appreciated as they contain a criticism of Hügel's methodology and christology, and a defense of orthodox christology. On the other hand, the fourth section, which is an apology for Blondel, appears to the latter as a real act of courage on the part of the author. After Maignen, Turinaz, Gayraud, and a host of other ecclesiastical writers have alienated the Catholic public opinion against Blondel and Laberthonnière, one runs a big risk if one speaks in their favor (LAB, 133).

On August 27, Mallet wrote to Blondel his favorable impressions of Wehrlé's article. In it, he recognizes the large contribution of the philosopher of Aix. According to Mallet, the thesis of historicism was refuted completely: "Quelles belles pages que celles où M. Wehrlé met en évidence les consequenses désastreuses de la thèse du cher Baron, où il bat Loisy par Loisy, où il expose la vraie christologie traditionnelle" (MMd, 59).

On August 28, Mgr Mercier of Louvain sent to Blondel his observations on History and Dogma: "Craignant de froisser les angustistes, vous êtes obligé de vous écarter souvent de la ligne de votre pensée principale; le lecteur suit vos digressions, mais les suit à regret, s'impatiente contre ceux qui vous obligent à les faire" (BV, 157). If only Blondel could express freely what he thinks, without having to guard himself against the objections of either reactionary conservatives or radical critics, he would be more readable, and better understood: "Votre pensée fondamentale est indiscutablement vraie et, encore qu'elle soit vivante en toute âme chrétienne, elle a été tellement reléguée dans l'ombre par les adversaires du traditionalisme et du fidéisme..., qu'elle a toutes les apparences d'une nouveauté" (BV, 157).

On September 4, Laberthonnière answered Blondel. He shares the philosopher's disgust at so much ecclesiastical toadyism: "Ramener toute la vie chrétienne à la soumission au pape, c'est la rétrécir et même la dénaturer. La soumission au pape est un moyen et non une fin.... L'attachement à l'Eglise n'a rien de commun avec ces protestations de soumission qui renchérissent les unes sur les autres, et d'autant moins que derrière tout cela apparaît constamment le désir d'obtenir pour soi une lettre, une bénédiction spéciale dont on puisse se prévaloir contre les autres" (BL, 183-184). It is very strange, according to Laberthonnière, that so many Christians view Revelation as an aerolite fallen out of the clear blue sky: "Dieu vient dans notre pensée par notre vie et non pas dans notre vie par notre pensée. Ce qui constitue l'ordre surnaturel ce ne sont pas des 'définitions' que Dieu a promulguées du haut des nuages, mais un acte d'amour qui a mêlé sa vie à la nôtre" (BL, 184). Revelation affects men only when it is assimilated in their whole life. Christian life is not produced by speculative definitions, but by the love of God. The Church is a community of believers within which, and not over which, the necessary authority is exercised; ecclesiastical authority is not so much a dominating power, as it is a ministry. It is a divine democracy, organized with a hierarchy, in which there are neither masters nor slaves.

On September 16, Hügel addressed an open letter to the editor of La Quinzaine in reply to Wehrlé's article. He claims that he never separated the eternal Christ from the temporal Christ, as Wehrlé accused him of doing; he simply distinguished between the two states of Christ, just as St. Paul did in II Corinthians 5:16. Christian thought aims to reconcile these two aspects of Christ's unique being which only an uncritical mind can fail to notice. On the one hand, some Catholics are convinced of the value of critical studies with which Catholic faith can be reconciled; on the other hand, there are Catholics who reject critical studies as so many fantasies and prefer to maintain some theological conclusions which they identify with faith. Hügel believes that Wehrlé ranks with the latter group. He ends with a sentence with which Blondel did agree: "Et la signification complète de sa propre personnalité, qui divine était infinie, ne pouvait jamais être épuisée, même par la connaissance humaine, c'est-à-dire limitée, du Christ" (See CCM, 243).

Mourret told Blondel on September 19 that Vénard has been the intermediary between de Grandmaison and Loisy in an effort to bring the latter back to orthodoxy. Mourret believes that Blondel's philosophy will preserve many who are hesitant within the Church: "Je vois l'espoir pour un grand nombre de loisystes de revenir à l'orthodoxie par la philosophie de l'action et la théorie du développement" (CCM, 307). But he has little hope for Loisy.

On September 21, Hügel wrote to Blondel his observations on Wehrlé's article. In Hügel's mind, Wehrlé is a devout priest, but a poor scholar. He deplores that Blondel should have used such an intermediary for his rebuttal: "J'ai cherché en vain de m'expliquer cela en termes de cette largeur et générosité d'âme que j'ai tant aimé chez vous; je n'arrive qu'à continuer d'être persuadé que ces grandes qualités sont bien noblement présentes en vous, mais qu'en cette occasion elles n'ont point fonctionné" (BV, 192). Moreover, Wehrlé's article was tendentious and between two possible interpretations of some of Hügel's expressions, he always attributed the worst to the baron.

On September 25, Blondel answered and insisted on Wehrlé's initiative and responsibility for his article. The fact that Hügel detects Blondel's influence behind Wehrlé's article appears to the philosopher of Aix an indication of the weakness of textual and literary criticism. It would be more correct, writes Blondel, to attribute History and Dogma to Wehrlé: "C'est M. Wehrlé qui m'y a introduit lui-même il y a plus de deux ans; car c'est lui qui m'a fait intervenir dans sa correspondance avec M. Loisy et qui par là a été le metteur en branle de toute la controverse, sans que sa pensée et la mienne cessent de garder leur parfaite indépendance, car nous n'avons pas été et nous ne sommes pas encore d'accord sur tous les points" (CCM, 244). In his efforts to save face before Hügel, Blondel fails to mention how much he has urged and pursued Wehrlé until the article was published.

Blondel passes on to the offensive. He lectures Hügel on the respect he owes to a priest who is concerned only with the glory of Christ, the Church, and the salvation of souls.

Blondel proposes then his opinion on the temporal state of Christ: "La kénose a consisté en ce que le Christ a pris conscience humano modo de sa personnalité, et de sa personnalité divine, n'ayant jamais eu à douter qu'il fût Dieu, pas plus que nous ne doutons que nous sommes hommes" (CCM,245). The distinction between the fundamental personality and the actual self-consciousness leaves room for what is said about the "growth" in Christ, a growth which does not affect the fundamental certitude of his divine sonship, but constitutes a real growth respectu conscientiae, making him similar to us and leaving him in fieri, subject to obscurities, effort, physical and spiritual suffering, as long as he is in the state of subjection and passion. According to Blondel, Hügel's distinction between the two states of Christ is too radical:

> L'idée d'un Christ terrestre *contraire* au Christ céleste, de deux Christ qui ne sont en somme que *tangents* l'un à l'autre (si même ils le sont), mais sans compénétration connue ou connaissable, de deux Christ qui ne sont pas deux états d'un même être, d'une même personne consciente de son unique personnalité, mais deux existences qui ont chacune une conscience différente, de deux Christ qui sont tellement antithétiques que même l'esprit éclairé par la foi ne peut, ne doit pas retrouver ou rechercher dans les gestes du Christ terrestre la plénitude, la réalisation de la transcendance divine (*CCM*, 246).

A psychologist could make an interesting study of the motives which led Blondel to distort Hügel's distinctions into oppositions in order to emphasize his dissociation from the Loisy-Hügel camp. Blondel becomes subjective in his conclusion: "J'ai trouvé tout naturel que vous descendiez dans l'arène, contre moi, pour M. Loisy que je n'avais pourtant pas attaqué; tout naturel que le cher Henri Bremond vous prêtât son concours, car il ne s'agissait pas de M. Loisy ou de moi, mais de la Vérité même" (*CCM*, 246-247).

Blondel continued to plead innocent of any participation in the article of Wehrlé. In a letter to Mourret on September 25, he again ridicules the critical methods of Hügel who believes to find traces of Blondel's influence in Wehrlé's article (*BV*, 193). The historian wonders why Blondel continued to ridicule Hügel's failure to distinguish between Wehrlé's style and his own, while the main point at issue was Blondel's influence on Wehrlé's article (Compare for instance *CCM*, 225-230 and *BV*, 180, with *BV*, 193).

Mourret sought a way to take Blondel off the hook. he does not mind if Hügel learns that he is the mysterious priest who approved Wehrlé's article. Furthermore, he is ready to swear before God and men that Blondel has neither provoked, nor composed, nor corrected Wehrlé's article (CCM, 244-245).

Mourret adds some news concerning Loisy who claims to remain orthodox even though he is expecting a condemnation from Rome. According to Vénard, Mourret's source of information, Loisy accepts the limitations of history, the orthodox christology, and the love of God as the motive for the Incarnation. But Mourret feels that Loisy has not cleared up all their objections. For one thing, he cannot accept Loisy's ranking the Synoptics above the fourth Gospel as more valuable historical documents. He rejects also Loisy's accusation that Blondel's conception of Christ's consciousness is a sort of mystical dream. Mourret claims that he knows well enough orthodox theology to realize that Blondel has supplied its best philosophical justification. Finally, he tells Blondel that he is more pessimist than Vénard on the future of Loisy (CCM, 307-308).

On September 29, archbishop Mignot gave to Hügel his impressions after reading Wehrlé's article: "J'ai lu l'article de cet abbé dans la Quinzaine et lui fait dire par M. Birot que la deuxième moitié de son travail prêtait plus encore que la première à la discussion et à la contradiction, attendu qu'il ne peut nous dire que par des raisons a priori ce qu'il croit être la nature de la conaissance humaine de Notre-Seigneur" (HDC, 588).

The whole problem was discussed again in a new article by Bernard Allo, "Extrinsécisme et Historicisme" (RT, 12 (1904), 437-465). According to Blondel, Allo defends him against the extrinsicist Gayraud, but seems more favorable to historicism (LAB, 133).

In his article, Allo recognizes in "extrinsicism" and "historicism" two neologisms created by Blondel to represent two extreme tendencies. What Allo wants to find out is whether there is any objective foundation for Blondel's caricatures. First of all, some have said that extrinsicism represents the traditional apologetics, that of St. Thomas, and that of the first Vatican council. But then, asks Allo, how could a sincere Catholic as Blondel attack such unshakable strongholds? Presumably Blondel criticized the elementary and simplified forms of this apologetics that one reads in most textbooks:

> Est extrinséciste quiconque ne sait défendre la foi qu'en alignant des raisonnements extrinsèques, sinon tout à fait étrangers, soit aux préoccupations intimes d'une foule d'âmes et aux moyens réels de l'apostolat, soit à cette science des besoins de l'humanité et de ses membres, qui a tant d'affinité avec l'étude de la grâce, et un si étroit rapport avec la vérité religieuse. Extrinséciste aussi, cette foi, par un exclusivisme défavorable à l'histoire, celui qui, de parti pris, ne voudrait envisager les faits du passé qu'au seul point de vue du mode miraculeux qu'ils peuvent présenter; celui qui négligerait la haute valeur apologétique de leur ensemble

> et de leur harmonie ... Extrinséciste enfin, et de la manière la plus malheureuse, celui qui, par défaut de critique, ferait des essais d'apologétique historique en apparence et, en réalité, étrangers à toute logique et à toute vérité de l'histoire (p. 447).

Allo does not want to identify any such extrinsicists for fear of beginning a new controversy. Furthermore, he says that extrinsicism is much more a tendency than a doctrine, even though it is the characteristic of a certain school of exegesis.

In contrast to "extrinsicism", there is a double form of "intrinsicism", equally disastrous: a psychological intrinsicism and an historical intrinsicism. Allo does not believe that historicism really exists as a doctrine, because it implies a contradiction untenable either by the Catholics, or by any philosopher, even if this latter one is a positivist; it is equally untenable by any professional historian and exegete. Historicism cannot be the error of the specialists as such who, through textual and literary criticism, accumulate the data for a future historical construction and require a certain autonomy for their research. If anyone can be accused of historicism, it can be only one who builds up historical syntheses. But then, no respectable historian would commit all the confusions that Blondel has described. Blondel seemed to point to a vast category of Catholic exegetes and historians; in reality, only one name can be suspected, that which was always at the tip of his pen, but which he refrained from writing out of charity, namely, that of Loisy. Neither in theory, nor in practice, however, did Loisy eliminate all religious philosophy from history. It was indeed because of his particular religious philosophy that he was involved in all sorts of problems. Outside of this case, Allo knows of only defects, errors, and derogations to the historical method in which numerous scholars have fallen inadvertently. Those who are more inclined towards historicism are sophistical writers who are neither philosophers, nor specialists, nor historians, but who make use of all these sciences without respecting the limits of each. In conclusion, Allo proposes his own solution to the problem of modern scientific apologetics. The first place should be given to the arguments based on miracles and prophecies; hence the extrinsicists are right. Secondly, the argument should be taken from a view of the present and permanent state of the Church, and in general from the psychological, moral, sociological, and aesthetical proofs which the school of Blondel emphasizes. Thirdly, an integral historical knowledge is required, which Allo accepts as his own form of historicism. Such a synthesis, he concludes, remains a project. In sum, Allo tried to satisfy and reconcile every party in the crisis.

In a letter to Mourret on October 7, Blondel made some observations on Allo's article: "Remarquez aussi que, comme d'autres, il emploie les mots 'historicisme' et 'extrinsécisme' en un sens normal, alors qu'ils n'ont sous ma plume qu'un sens péjoratif, pour désigner, non l'usage, mais l'abus des préoccupations exclusivement historiques ou exclusivement dogmatiques" (CCM, 205).

In the October issue of BLE (Oct. 1904, 323-326), there was an anonymous note [written in fact by Batiffol] which summarized the controversy raised by History and Dogma. Both Blondel and Hügel are criticized, while Wehrlé is given a qualified approval. On November 14, Blondel sent to Mourret his impressions of Batiffol's article:

> Le Recteur de Toulouse aimera mieux donner raison au Loisysme que de paraître avancer d'un pas vers la philosophie... Peut-être aussi sent-il bien que les historiens se feront plus facilement craindre de l'Autorité, que les philosophes. Car ils ont les faits, qu'on redoute comme les puissants de ce monde. Tandis qu'on s'imagine que les idées n'ont ni légions d'anges, ni épées d'hommes, ni monuments de granit pour les rendre fortes, écrasantes, inéluctables (CCM, 306).

In the following issue of BLE (Nov.-Dec. 1904), 338-357), there was another anonymous article [this time written by Vénard] entitled "La valeur historique du dogme." The author observes that for informed readers, there is an evident similarity between the religious philosophy of Loisy's "petits livres" and the mystical and anti-intellectualist philosophy of Blondel, Laberthonnière, and Tyrrell. In History and Dogma, according to Vénard, Blondel marked his distance from Loisy, but in a manner most displeasing to classical theologians.

The articles of Hügel and Wehrlé have only complicated the situation. Vénard believes that "sur la manière dont se fait le passage de l'histoire au dogme, il ne semble pas qu'il y ait entre M. Loisy et M Blondel autre chose que des nuances; c'est, à mon sens, dans le passage inverse du dogme à l'histoire que s'accuse la divergence fondamentale." (see HDC, 594)

Concerning the passage from history to dogma, Loisy and Blondel begin with the modern conception of history which is limited to the phenomenological description of the external aspects of events bound to each other by a natural determinism. At this point, Hügel's distinction between the viewpoints of the historian and those of the believer seems fruitful to Vénard. He refuses to consider such a distinction as a Kantian dichotomy, as Wehrlé did. According to Vénard, both Loisy and Blondel agree on the nature and the object of faith. In contrast to the textbooks of theology in which faith is described as an assent to propositional truth, Vénard says that both Loisy and Blondel understand faith as a personal commitment which is more voluntary than intellectual. The object of faith is the reality of Christ beyond the dogmatic formulations and the historical facts:

> Ni les formules dogmatiques en tant qu'énoncés de vérités spéculatives, ni les faits historiques dans leur simple réalité matérielle, ne peuvent être directement objets de foi, quoiqu'ils fournissent à la foi soit son point de départ, soit son expression abstraite (see HDC, 595).

Loisy and Blondel hold that history is both necessary, and yet insufficient for Christian faith. Consequently, there is no reason why Blondel should identify historicism with Loisy. The latter never proposed, in L'Evangile et l'Eglise, to prove by history alone the supernatural character of Christianity, but only the historical continuity between the Gospel and the Church.

If Loisy and Blondel agree that faith is necessary to explain the plus-value which one attributes to historical facts in order to arrive at dogmatic formulations, they disagree on the role that dogma should play in the determination of what is historical. Loisy wants to eliminate any extra-historical principle in the determination of what is historical: dogma stems from history, and not the reverse. Blondel believes that the supernatural is incarnated in history and should be read there. Since no historian is deprived of any metaphysical opinions, Blondel believes that a Christian historian cannot eliminate from his reading of events his own religious and metaphysical conceptions. What he observes externally as an historian, he can recognize internally as a believer. While Blondel is concerned with the integrity of vision, Loisy cares for the distinction of disciplines. Unfortunately, Loisy was accused of separating completely faith from historical science, even of opposing them. Vénard is sure that Loisy has only distinguished the factual event from its religious interpretation.

Vénard declares that he is satisfied neither with Loisy's methodology which can lead to illuminism, nor with Blondel's, which marks a return to extrinsicism. It is not sufficient for Blondel to defend the rights of dogmatic faith against Loisy who defends the rights of historical science. Historical realities cannot be deduced from dogmatic formulations, but must be established on their own grounds.

When Mourret read Vénard's article, he wrote his impressions to Blondel on December 18:

> Ni dans l'interprétation du mouvement qui va des faits aux dogmes, ni dans celle du mouvement des dogmes aux faits, vous n'acceptez la théorie des critiques historicistes. Ils s'en tiennent à deux ordres, à deux couches de réalité, perçues par deux procédés différents et, semble-t-il, hétérogènes: l'histoire et la foi. Ils oublient que la philosophie permet de combler la lacune. Ils oublient qu'il y a, en d'autres termes, deux histoires: l'histoire du phénomène, des apparances, et l'histoire de la réalité. Celle-ci est bien perçue par la foi, mais la philosophie justifie la légitimité de cette perception par la foi, et même par la raison (CCM, 309).

On the one hand, Mourret accuses the historicists, among whom he now ranks Vénard, of dealing with two layers of reality, one perceived by history, the other perceived by faith. On the other hand, he proposes two histories, one of the phenomena, the realm of scientific history, and the other, of the noumena, the realm of faith. The main difference between the two positions is that Mourret expects the philosophy of action to bridge the gap, to explain rationally what faith has perceived.

According to Wehrlé, Vénard's article was the result of a strategy:

> Il y a des dessous diplomatiques à cet article de Vénard, qui a été mijoté entre Batiffol, Loisy et l'auteur prudemment anonyme, car Loisy a certainement connu et approuvé la rédaction. D'autre part le Romain de Toulouse ... a cru bon de "gallicaniser" un peu avec les tenants de la science loisyste... Il était bien aisé de coqueter un peu avec l'adversaire influent ...D'autre part, Vénard, qui est le loisyste type de la modération universelle, tenait certainement, d'accord avec le Maître, à atténuer ... Il faut rapprocher les disparates en dégradant les nuances... Ramener Blondel à Loisy et vice versa, en retirant à Blondel un peu de son orthodoxie et à Loisy un peu de son ... hétérodoxie (CCM, 310).

It would seem that Wehrlé is concerned to save Blondel from being compromised by too close an association with Loisy.

On January 14, 1905, Blondel informed Vénard that he will publish a response in the Bulletin of Toulouse. It is not his intention to fall back on extrinsicism and to attribute to faith alone the determination of what is historical, but to find a rational and scientific method for the interpretation of historical phenomena. Blondel's article was entitled, "De la valeur historique du dogme."[1]

At the beginning of his article, Blondel expresses his gratitude for the efforts which Vénard made to interpret favorably his treatise, History and Dogma. He now proposes new clarifications to avoid confusions. He maintains against Vénard the necessity of extra-historical means for the historical determination of facts. Christian faith, he says, presupposes the historicity of certain realities: for example, the dogmas of Christ's virginal birth and divine personality are facts, even though they escape normal observation by the historian. Blondel defines the problem in the following manner:

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[1] BLE (Mars, 1905), 61-77; reproduced in Les Premiers Ecrits de Maurice Blondel (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), pp. 229-245: we are quoting from the latter publication).

> La question est de savoir si en effet l'historien se reconnaîtra compétent pour opérer seul ce triage, et si, de son point de vue exclusif, il ne serait pas entraîné à regarder comme possible ou probable l'idéalisation de tout ce que les documents critiquement interprétés ne permettent pas d'affirmer à la lettre (p. 231).

The problem for the Catholic is to maintain the religious value of certain facts as indissolubly linked to their historical reality even though that reality cannot be demonstrated historically: "Quels seront donc les titres justificatifs de croyances dogmatiquement historiques, qui ne sauraient ni se fonder sur une pure inspiration mystique, ni se borner à de simples affirmations subjectives et symboliques, ni se contenter de données objectives que la critique justement déclare insuffisantes?" (p.232).

Blondel proposes Tradition as the solution, since it summarizes the data of history, the efforts of reason, the accumulated experiences of faithful action, along with the supernatural assistance of the divine Spirit. He claims that he is not so much concerned with the external aspects of the life of Jesus Christ, as with the essential content of his message. He does not want to deduce historical realities from dogmatic formulations. Independently of the testimony of faith, he indicates several motives to justify doctrinal affirmations which involve an historical reality: (1) the initial, direct, and concrete impressions of the first disciples motivated their known attitude; (2) the acts of Christ himself involved a progressive and deepening interpretation; (3) faithful living, through love and moral rectitude, is a collective experimentation of the objective theme offered by history.

If the historian alone is incapable of solving this problem, it is only because of a methodological abstraction. According to Blondel, the passage from facts to dogmas is inevitably linked to the passage from dogmas to facts: these two movements are separable for scientific analysis, but not in concrete reality, nor in the living act of faith. Neither history alone, nor faith alone, can explain the relation between the religious and the historical values of facts. Just as the conclusions of technical history do not suffice to justify all the dogmatic affirmations, so faith should have another foundation than faith itself.

Historicism, according to Blondel, involves the exclusion of extra-historical means to explain scientifically the dogmatic interpretation of documents as well as to justify the historical truth of dogmas. At one time, says Blondel, Christian beliefs seemed to coincide immediately with Christian facts, and history seemed to suffice for dogma. But, now with the progress of science and new discoveries, this simple view is no longer possible. Blondel believes that Catholicism is linked not only to fundamentally human states of consciousness, but also to divinely incarnated realities. By means of his philosophy of action, he hopes to show how "Christian science" is organized in the tradition of the Church.

Since there is a necessary and inevitable interpretation and idealization of facts, Blondel writes, there is need also of a method to discern and justify the realization in facts of the spiritural truths and dogmatic definitions; otherwise, the idealization, without any definite limits, would remove Christianity from the positive facts. The legitimate progress of historical and religious sciences requires a parallel progress in philosophical and theological methods. It is useless to align the new discoveries of science with the ancient speculative methods. If faith rested only on texts and documents subjected to historical criticism, the positions of traditional orthodoxy and the most formal definitions of the Church would no longer hold. Therefore, it is imperative, declares Blondel, to find the extra-historical justifications for faith. If the religious value is independent of the historical value of a fact observed from the provisional viewpoint of scientific proof, it is not so from the viewpoint of the reality itself. Blondel tries then to illustrate his solution by means of algebric notations.

The word fact, he writes, is not univocal. It means first of all the "historical phenomena" (A), which is the aspect of the facts preserved by language, documents, and institutions. Nothing comes to our knowledge except by means of visible signs (a); behind the sign testified to, there is the problem of the truth of the testimony (a'); behind the witness, there is the problem (a") of the reality of the event (a"1), of the state of consciousness (a"2), of the being testified to (a"3). Consequently, the word fact can mean various things (a; a'; a", 1, 2, 3).

So far, it was only a question of the historicity of facts. Blondel now speaks of facts whose historical value is combined with a religious value (B). The believer holds these facts as the object of his faith, as the food for his spiritual life, and as the eternal term of his destiny.

For some of these facts, the relation between the historical value and the religious value is purely extrinsic (b); for instance, the questions of chronological and anecdotal concordances between the various Gospels, the itinerary of Christ, and so forth.

For some other facts, the relation between the historical value (B) is intrinsic; that is, their historicity cannot be denied without detriment to certain doctrines. These facts have a religious value (B) which always presupposes an historical value, either that of visible signs (Aa), or the truth of a testimony (Aa') as the premises for their demonstration and they imply the historicity of the being testified to (Aa"3) as the conclusion which precedes the affirmation of faith.

Blondel now complicates his algebra and attributes the symbol (C) to the facts whose religious value is intrinsically bound to their historical value. Among these, he distinguishes three groups.

Certain religious facts which involve a physical reality (Cl), as for instance, the virginal conception, or even the resurrection, seem, by their nature, to be susceptible of an experimental observation, and consequently, of a strictly historical proof. But it just happens that they have accidentally been substracted from certain of the ordinary conditions of historical verification. Consequently, other guarantees are required to pass from the visible signs (a) to the reality of the event (a"). For example, in the case of the virginal conception, only Mary could possibly testify, and if she did, it was only belatedly and discreetly; it is impossible therefore to say either that the virginal conception can be established historically (A=a"), or that it escaped absolutely the knowledge of the evangelists (A without a'). Blondel claims that there were several witnesses of the resurrection and that it was observed at several occasions. He does not distinguish between the vision of the resurrected Christ and the "event" of the resurrection. For Blondel, it is necessary to maintain the physical reality of the resurrected body, even though its manifestation was historically abnormal. The resurrection could not be observed freely by anyone, but only by priviledged witnesses prepared to recognize the facts (C2 and C3) which he will now explain.

Other religious facts involve a psychological reality (C2). These are facts of a transcendental and intimate nature; they can be testified to only by those who are conscious of them. This is the case of Christ's consciousness of his divine personality, his true mission, the meaning of his life and death. Blondel maintains that we do not have the direct testimony of this fact, but only Christ's words, his attitude, and his acts. Before one can accept the various reports of this fact, several problems need to be solved: was it necessary that Christ reveal everything without reserve? was the understanding of this first testimony verbally expressed as much as it was concretely felt and practically determinative? In short, one must not confuse this religious fact of a psychological reality (C2) neither with the truth of the testimony (a'), nor even with what can be known of the state of consciousness of Christ (a"2), by means of the truth of the testimony (a').

Other religious facts involve a metaphysical or divine reality (C3). These are facts of the spiritual and even supernatural order which cannot be directly observed. To accept these facts with the certitude of faith, there is need of a whole series of exterior and interior proofs, a spiritual effort, and the help of grace. At every step of the historical investigation which leads to dogmatic assertions (A, a, a', a", B, C1, C2), and especially at the last moment, the dogmatic assertions benefit of proofs which are independent of the exclusively historical sources. These complementary justifications guarantee to dogma a consistency which the critical historian cannot exclude from his final conclusions.

Finally, there is the ultimate religious fact (Z), the fact, affirmed by faith, of the inspiration and the inerrance of Scripture. This fact cannot be observed directly; it has no "historical phenomena" (a); it cannot be established without the whole series of facts previously discussed. In short, the global thesis of biblical inspiration depends indirectly and partly from the historicity of everything else; on the other hand, the thesis of biblical inspiration exercises its own control and authority over the rest.

After he has made all these distinctions, Blondel proposes his own conclusions on the question of principles and methods concerned with the relations between history and dogma.

All these facts, directly and indirectly, in a certain respect, are subjected to the historical method. According to Blondel, any fact deprived of all historical character would equally be deprived of Christian value. Even the supernatural facts have been, and are accessible now only insofar as they are incarnate. One grasps them gradually only, per gradus debitos, by a continuous line which links C and even Z to Aa. It is essential for the religious efficacy of these facts to verify constantly the route which leads to the superior facts and to adapt them to the progress of natural knowledge. The religious value of the superior facts is not proportional to their proven historicity for they can be verified by other means. The religious value (B) does not depend only on the historical value (A). It has its own justification and draws its strength from another reality than the historical reality. And when C, in a sort of organic synthesis combines B and A, Blondel thinks that A benefits of the realist vitality of B. In other words, the religious value can add consistency and realism to the historical value.

It is not sufficient to say that the religious facts (C2 and C3) involve other proofs than the physical facts (Aa) and the "historical phenomena" in general. The certitude acquired by these essential facts enlightens and strengthens the shaky historical data of certain assertions of the type Cl. All these assertions are not historical on the same level. For example, the adoration of the Magi, according to Blondel, in contrast to the virginal conception, is susceptible of a greater "historical" verification, even though it has less doctrinal value. Some religious facts which involve a divine reality (C3) can guarantee the reality of an event (a"), even more than visible signs alone (a) could allow. Blondel illustrates this point with the Immaculate Conception where the truth of the historical testimony (a') was initially reduced to an imperceptible minimum and where there were no visible signs (a). In a footnote, Blondel adds:

> On n'a pas besoin de *A* tout entier pour arriver à *C3*. Et lorsque la certitude de *C3* est acquise, on peut légitimement revenir éclairer et confirmer *C1* et *a"*. En ce dernier cas, *a* n'a guère qu'un rôle négatif; c'est-à-dire qu'on ne saurait rien affirmer qui fût contredit par *a*, mais que la raison positive de l'affirmation *C1* *a"* est encore ailleurs qu'en son phénomène historique direct. Si, parti de *a*, on peut, après avoir passé par *B*, *C3* revenir, non seulement à *C1*, mais même à *a"*, c'est que les titres justificatifs de *C3*, pour n'être pas empruntés à l'histoire, n'en sont pas moins des données positives, objectives, et collectives. En *C*, *A* profite d'une autre *connaissance* que la connaissance historique. - Pour contrôler la critique, l'Église ne procède pas *a priori*; elle se fonde sur des données autres que l'historicité, mais également positives et vérifiées. Ce qui distingue l'Histoire Sainte de l'histoire, c'est que l'histoire est extérieure, morte, dans le passé, tandis que l'Histoire Sainte, qui a été, est encore, vit en nous, se réalise et se vérifie dans le présent. Appliquer à celle-ci les seules lois de celle-là, c'est la tuer (p. 242).

Translated without the algebric notations, this passage means the following. It is not necessary to have proven completely the historical value before one can assent to a fact of the supernatural order. When the certitude of this supernatural fact has been acquired, it can enlighten and confirm some miraculous facts such as the virginal conception and the resurrection, and even the reality of historical events. In the latter case, the visible signs exercise only a negative control: that is, one cannot affirm anything contradicted by the visible signs, while the positive reason for affirming miraculous facts and historical events does not stem from the immediate historical phenomena. If it is possible to start from the visible signs to grasp the religious value and the supernatural facts, and then to return not only to the miraculous facts but also to historical events, it is because the warrants which justify the supernatural facts, even though they do not derive from history, are nevertheless positive, objective, and collective data. When the Church controls critical history, it does not proceed a priori; it presupposes positive and verified data, other than those of historicity. The distinction between Sacred History and scientific history is that scientific history is external to life, therefore dead, deals with the past only, while Sacred History comprises the past and present, lives within us, is realized and verified in the present. To apply to Sacred History the laws of scientific history amounts to killing the former. In other words, the life of the Church has within itself the motives for its self-justification; scientific history can only dissect its vestiges.

Blondel rejects the accusation that he attempts to "render historically certain what is historically doubtful, or the reverse; as if he attributed to the visible signs (a) what he said only of religious facts of a physical reality (Cl) and of historical events (a").

He summarizes the two abuses that he criticized earlier under the names of historicism and extrinsicism. Historicism limits itself exclusively to the ascending line (A, a, a', a , b, B), as to the only way of grasping the superior facts. Historicism stops the ascent as soon as the proofs are not historically sufficient, as if there could be no other complementery justifications for the objective reality of our beliefs. The historical value (A) is separated from the religious value (B) as if the former were only the more or less accidental occasion for the latter. Instead of searching for an intrinsically religious character in the facts intrinsically considered (C), one ends by regarding the properly Christian facts as being posited only by the ecclesiastical authority (b), as having but an extrinsic relation with the beliefs. Christian beliefs stem from facts, but transcend them so much that critical science cannot reintegrate them in their historical origins. In short, historicism neither admits extra-historical proofs, nor allows the light of supernatural facts to shine on historical events. The historicist does not understand how there can be a legitimate certitude of an historical *reality* which historical *science* leaves uncertain, as if the historicity of a fact were the sole measure, not only of its reality, but even of the certitude which we can obtain of that very reality. In a footnote, Blondel adds:

> Le "malentendu" consiste en ce que, par une sorte de cécité philosophique, on estime que tout ce qui, dans la foi, n'est pas histoire, est pure foi; on méconnaît donc toute une part des raisons positives ou scientifiques, des *raisons rationnelles* *et* *expérimentales* de la foi. Et dès lors on ne conçoit plus que *C* (le dogme) puisse trouver en *B* (la vie religieuse) une lumière et une confirmation pour *A* (le réalisme historique). Car on a inséré *B*, par une unique racine, en *a*; en sorte que la vie religieuse, sevrée de tout autre aliment puisé dans le réel, se rattache non plus aux faits, mais à l'idée qu'on s'en est faite, à la conscience qu'on en a eue, qu'on en a, ou qu'on en aura. En *B* il y a non seulement la foi, *F*, il y a aussi de la réalité vécue, connue, raisonnables, *R*. Et c'est par le double réalisme de la vie et de l'histoire que *B* et *A* s'entrelacent dans la foi. Les affirmations "dogmatiquement historiques" (*Ba"*) contiennent toujours en même temps des éléments empruntés à *Aa'*, *R*, *F* et *Z*. J'ai essayé ailleurs d'analyser le contenu très riche de *R*.

Historicism rejects the notion that dogma can find in the life of religion a confirmation for historical realism. Besides history on the one hand, and faith on the other, it neglects several positive and scientific rational justifications, "des *raisons rationnelles* *et* *expérimentales* de la foi." In other words, it neglects the pragmatic justifications for a dogmatic faith. According to Blondel, in the life of religion there is not only faith (*F*); there is also a lived, known, and reasonable reality (*R*). The religious value and the historical value are linked together in faith by means of the double realism of life and history. The "dogmatically historical" affirmations (Ba") comprise elements borrowed from historical testimonies (Aa'), the use of reason (R), the act of faith (F), and the belief in the global biblical inspiration (Z). In this fashion, Blondel offers a pragmatic justification for the relations between history and dogma, reason and faith, science and life.

Extrinsicism, according to Blondel, is the extreme opposite of historicism. Instead of ending with the global inspiration of the Scriptures (Z), it begins with it. Consequently, by a process of abstract reflexion, skimming over the intermediary steps, the extrinsicist transforms each detail into an object of faith (b into B); the whole letter (Aa) is bound with the whole supernatural order (C3). While historicism limits itself to historical proofs, extrinsicism applies the principle of authority which stems from dogma.

Blondel accuses both extremes, historicism and extrinsicism, of neglecting the multiple proofs drawn from the intrinsic examination of facts, from the religious experiences of individual souls, from the collective tradition of the Christian society. All these proofs constitute an integral and indispensable element of the dogmatic labor; they have a rational character; they can be the object of science; they can be studied systematically; they have an objective, universal, and communicable truth. Between pure history and pure faith, there is a human intermediary which links historical science with Christian life. Without any detriment, either to history or to faith, Blondel proposes a philosophy to overcome the double danger of fideism and ideology, to propose for historical reality and dogmatic truth some justifying warrants which are distinct both from faith and from history. He rejects the accusations of naturalism and mysticism. To those who accuse him of confusions, he replies that they lack the key to the whole algebra of distinctions with which he is operating.

This article of Blondel, "De la valeur historique du dogme," closes the controversy opened up by Loisy's L'Evangile et L'Eglise, during which Blondel wrote History and Dogma in his attempt to provide for a via media between neoscholastic theologians and critical historians. Shortly afterwards, a new controversy arose which centered around the publication of Le Roy's article, "Qu'est-ce qu'un dogme?" Blondel was also involved in this new stage of the Modernist crisis, which lies beyond the limits of this dissertation.

CONCLUSION

At the end of this long interpretation of Blondel's treatise, *History and Dogma*, in the light of his correspondence with the most prominent scholars involved in the French Modernist crisis, it will be useful to summarize the results of this investigation and briefly comment on its significance. It is important to remember that the study of the Modernist crisis has been handicapped by the partisanship of those involved. For some, the modernists have been heroes; for others, villains. The specter of Modernism still haunts the mind of "conservative" Catholics. *Roma locuta est*. Their concern with the modernists can only be to reiterate the earlier condemnations. The "liberal" Catholics, who might share the original intent of some modernists to renew the intellectual life within the Church, are very careful to indicate that their inspiration derives from men who have never been explicitly condemned by Rome.

Blondel in particular has been a center of controversy because "liberal" Catholics have wished to defend him against the suspicion of compromising either with the modernists on the left or reactionary scholastics on the right. While our own investigation no doubt also has its biases, it nevertheless analyses one body of material in greater detail than has previously been done. The picture of Blondel which emerges from these incidents is that of a man whose intellectual creativity and literary production seem to have been inhibited by the unhappily tense and polemical situation in which he lived and worked.

At a time when the Roman Catholic church in France was in open conflict with the republican government and the state university, Maurice Blondel hesitated between two vocations. Had he become a priest, as he thought he would until he was thirty-four, he would have shared in the ordinary magisterium of the Church which, unfortunately in France at the end of the nineteenth century, spoke unheeded by a majority of French intellectuals. As a matter of fact, he became a philosopher in the state university, in a milieu rarely frequented by ecclesiastics. He chose the lay vocation as one providing him with a greater intellectual freedom. Being a staunch Roman Catholic, he resolved to become an apostle of the Church within university circles.

Early in his career, Blondel chose to work on the relations between faith and reason, between the supernatural and the natural. He wanted to show the need for the supernatural inherent within nature, at least as a sense of insufficiency, an emptiness, or an aptitude created by God, and to understand the natural conditions for the recognition and the acceptance of the supernatural itself. Little by little, he discovered that his apologetical motive was not sufficient to convince philosophers of the truth of Christianity. He resolved to develop a very technical philosophy to obtain a hearing. With the method of immanence, he hoped to pursue to the utmost the autonomy of philosophy without any detriment to, but respecting perfectly the heteronomy of, the Christian religion. The early objections of the French rationalist philosophers were soon overcome when Blondel indicated clearly his acceptance of integral rationalism, even in the study of revealed religion. It was much more difficult to convince the neoscholastic theologians that he was not reducing Christianity to the limits of reason alone. By his distinction between the notion and the reality of the Christian supernatural, he claimed to subject to philosophical investigation every single notion current in Christianity, while respecting the supernatural reality of Christianity.

At a time when French university professors had crossed the water-shed with Descartes and Kant, the majority of Roman Catholic schools of philosophy expected that a return to medieval philosophy would serve as a panacea to overcome the growing disaffection from the Church. The first period of the neoscholastic revival, as Roger Aubert, Etienne Gilson, and other scholars have shown, involved a servile imitation of late and decadent scholasticism. It is not hard to understand why Blondel's mind was easily won over by modern philosophers, while his heart remained attached to Roman Catholic orthodoxy still couched in scholastic phraseology. Because most of the exchanges between university and ecclesiastical philosophers involved conflict and opposition, Blondel conceived the project of combining the best elements of both the Kantian and the Aristotelian philosophies, by surmounting their respective limitations.

Blondel reacted against two defects common within French philosophical circles: idealism and extreme intellectualism. The Sorbonne philosophers were greatly surprised when he proposed to study action in all its concrete realizations for his doctoral dissertation. They told Blondel to limit himself to the "idea" of action. He overcame their idealist prejudice when he insisted that philosophy deals not only with ideas, but with the universal conditions of being. Even revealed religion should not escape the scrutiny of philosophy. Extreme intellectualism was another defect against which Blondel reacted. While some scientists and philosophers imagined their system to be exhaustive and self-sufficient, Blondel insisted that reflective thought, however systematized, is never adequate to life and action. Human action benefits greatly from reflection, but reflection never exhausts the comprehension of human action.

When Blondel's thesis, L'Action, was presented by others as a modern variant of traditional apologetics, the philosopher of Aix reacted violently with his famous Letter on Apologetics, in 1896. He rejected the insinuation that his philosophy of action was merely a subjective and psychological approach to religion, and insisted on its genuinely rational, scientific, and autonomous nature. He proposed that traditional apologetics abandon its false or pseudo-philosophy in favor of modern critical methods. He considered Thomism as a dogmatic frame of reference, satisfactory only to those already secure within the bastion. For his opposition to the neoscholastic revival, considered sterile with its neglect of modern philosophy, Blondel was criticized by ecclesiastical writers as an innovator rejecting traditional beliefs. He can rightly be called a precursor of the French Modernist movement, in the sense that his aim was to translate the wealth of Christian tradition into modern thought patterns. He shared with Laberthonnière, Loisy, Hügel, and several other scholars the same ambitions for the renewal of all the aspects of the intellectual life of the Catholic church and for the reformulation of Christian doctrine according to the requirements of modern critical sciences. All these facts indicate what may be called Blondel's earlier modernist tendencies.

The publication of L'Evangile et L'Eglise by Loisy caused a turmoil within ecclesiastical circles. Rare were the priests acquainted with the modern critical methods applied to Scripture and Church history. Consequently, the debates over Loisy's "petit livre rouge" became heated. Some radical progressives eventually rejected their Christian faith. Some conservative neoscholastics rejected the modern critical methods as leading to liberal Protestantism and apostasy. In this squabble in the sacristy, the ecclesiastical leaders took fright. Disciplinary measures were soon applied to safeguard the deposit of faith. Leo XIII was reluctant to curb the freedom of the scholars, while Pius X, a very holy man but not an intellectual, did not feel the same hesitation. Book after book was condemned by the Congregation of the Index; censures and excommunications deprived dozens of priests of all their privileges. As a precursor of the Modernist movement, Blondel was again an easy target for the reactionary forces. Fortunately, he enjoyed the protection of influential friends within ecclesiastical circles, both at the Roman Curia and in France. Furthermore, he dissociated himself publicly from every scholar who was censured or condemned. He circulated personal apologies for his orthodoxy and observed faithfully all the measures of prudence recommended to him. He was even ready to make the "sacrifice of Abraham" and to commit an intellectual suicide if that were required to maintain his loyalty to the Church.

Pressed by his two ecclesiastical advisers, Wehrlé and Mourret, Blondel undertook reluctantly to write History and Dogma. On the one hand, it was hard for him to criticize Loisy's biblical exegesis when he was not himself a biblical scholar, and when he agreed with him on the necessity of rejecting scholasticism in favor of modern critical methods. On the other hand, an outright criticism of Loisy could only encourage the neoscholastic reactionaries, like Gayraud and company, to sabotage their common program for the renewal of the Catholic intellectual life. The first article of History and Dogma was a tempered criticism of the neoscholastic philosophy, responsible for both extrinsicism and historicism. In the eyes of Mourret, this article appeared to be more anti-Gayraud and anti-traditionalist than anti-Loisy. Blondel was advised to dissociate himself more clearly from the modernists if he expected to escape condemnation. In the second article, Blondel repeated most of the objections raised previously in his correspondence with Loisy and Hügel. Several of his criticisms had already been answered in the responses of Loisy and

Hügel. In particular, they all agreed on the futility of Christian apologetics based on history alone. From the correspondence and the articles examined in this dissertation, it should be clear that Loisy and Hügel were even less inclined towards historicism than Batiffol and Lagrange, who are usually proclaimed as the opponents of historicism. A mixture of extrinsicism and historicism has indeed dominated the field of apologetics until the eve of Vatican II.

In his last article on History and Dogma, Blondel began with the two-sources theory, Scripture AND Tradition, current in the Roman Catholic church between Trent and Vatican II. He soon rejected the unscientific notion of an esoteric transmission de ore in aurem of historical facts, received truths, accepted teachings, hallowed practices, and ancient customs. With the growing tendency towards written documents, he claimed, such a notion would lead to the "exhaustion of Tradition itself." In the light of his philosophy of action, Blondel preferred to speak of Tradition as encompassing the whole life of the Church, including the practice of all the faithful, the speculation of all the Christian scholars, and the exercise of the infallible magisterium assisted by the Holy Spirit. With such a comprehensive notion, he expected to overcome the extreme intellectualism and rationalism of both the neoscholastic theologians and the radical critical scholars. He succeeded in proving his loyalty to the Church and his willingness to maintain an orthodox faith. He opened new horizons for Catholic scholars and inspired a whole generation of theologians to venture beyond the preliminary steps he made.

The fundamental problem discussed in History and Dogma concerns the scientific method for proceeding from history to dogma, and then reading history in the light of dogma. He labelled the two extreme attitudes to be rejected as extrinsicism and historicism. Extrinsicism subjects historical science to dogmatic presuppositions, while historicism reduces dogma to what can be ascertained by historical methods alone.

Blondel's notion of history is complex. In his own philosophy of action, he preferred to develop an integral phenomenology before tackling the problems of metaphysics. He expected the modern scientific historian to adopt the same method of immanence as he had done in philosophy. He conceived historical science as a strictly positive science which links together facts and events according to their natural determinism. Such a scientific synthesis however, could only be an abstraction from real life, a phenomenal description preliminary to metaphysical and theological interpretations.

Besides this distinction between historical observation and historical interpretation, Blondel conceived a distinction between ordinary scientific history and Sacred History. He identified the latter with the whole life of the Church, including the practice of all the Christian faithful, the speculation of Christian scholars, and the infallible magisterium of the Church, assisted by the Holy Spirit. Thus, Sacred History was simply another word for Tradition. His distinction between the two kinds of history clearly raises problems for those who object to placing positive science on one side and supernatural life on the other.

Blondel began his treatise, History and Dogma, with the intention of discovering a scientific method to explain the mutual relations between scientific history and dogmatic formulations, both conceived as intellectual abstractions from real life. He concluded by offering Tradition, also called Sacred History, that is, the whole life of the Church, as the bridge between history and dogma. In other words, the Church in the totality of its life can justify the historical foundations for dogmatic formulations and the dogmatic reading of history. His conclusion was much more clearly compatible with the position of an orthodox believer than with that of a scientist.

In his earlier writings, Blondel rejected the superposition of grace over nature which he attributed to the scholastics, no less than the juxtaposition of grace and nature attributed to the Reformers, and the opposition of grace and nature of both the fideists and the rationalists. By the method of immanence, he expected to show the supernatural inherent within nature, just as God is immanent within the universe as much as he transcends it. He tried to explain rationally how God can influence ordinary events as well as miraculous occurrences.

In the course of his controversies with neoscholastic theologians, and afflicted by accusations of heresies, Blondel discovered the prudence of adopting the scholastic formulations in matters of doctrine while preserving his own method of immanence in matters of pure philosophy. This is the crucial point at which Blondel and Laberthonnière went their separate ways. Laberthonnière never abandoned his opposition to scholasticism which he viewed as a betrayal of Christian realism to Greek idealism. Not only did he accuse Thomas Aquinas of being the worst pagan, but he accused Blondel of compromising with a scholasticism earlier rejected, of living in a two-storied universe, the supernatural above the natural, the level of religion in which the faithful blindly obey an infallible authority and the level of reason in which the philosopher maintains his autonomy. Laberthonnière thought that man should be free in his acceptance of faith and in his practice of religion as he is in natural affairs. He could not see how the intelligence should be dissociated from the will and the heart in the former realm any more than in the latter. As the Modernist crisis progressed, Blondel preferred to speak in terms less offensive to ecclesiastical ears. As it turned out, Laberthonnière was silenced until death by ecclesiastical superiors, while Blondel is now recognized as an orthodox philosopher.

Blondel's notion of dogma is also very complex. First of all, he distinguished between the primary object of faith, which is God revealing himself, and the secondary object, which is the human intellectual expression of that revelation. He distinguished between Christian faith (foi-confiance), which is absolute, and Christian beliefs (foi-croyance), which are relative. Because of his belief in the infallibility of the Church, he recognized the voice of God in the official teaching of the magisterium; and yet, he was aware that all human expressions are deficient and never adequate to their object, especially when that object is God revealing himself. Dogmatic formulations presented a dual value for Blondel: they enjoyed an absolute authority insofar as they point to divine revelation, but they were limited by their relative and inadequate modes of human expression.

In virtue of his Panchristism, Blondel conceived the incarnation of the Word of God as the vinculum substantiale which links the whole created world to its Creator. The Incarnation is the means by which God redeems creation in a sort of transsubstantiation through which God becomes all in all. Blondel was definitely not a universalist if one means by that term the rejection of purgatory and hell and the universal salvation of men irrespective of their personal lives. But he certainly did not limit the benefits of redemption to those who come in contact with explicit revelation. He believed that all men of good will receive invisible graces to supplement the visible graces of the Church and the sacraments whenever these are not available.

Blondel accepted the fundamental christology of the Church, while he risked some personal opinions which were not always in the main stream of orthodoxy. He believed that Christ was truly God and truly man. But when he wrote on the humanity of Christ, he conceived it more in terms of a generic humanity, than in terms of an individual humanity. For Blondel, the Son of God became the son of man by assuming the humanity of all men. He was so fearful of falling into nestorianism that he leaned heavily towards monophysitism. In reaction against Loisy and Hügel, he preferred to emphasize the divinity of Christ. He spoke of the eternal Christ, the object of mystical experiences, much more than he examined carefully the humanity of Christ as an object for historical investigation.

While he recognized the need for such an historical investigation, he really did not pursue it.

Blondel's main objection against Loisy centered on Jesus' consciousness of his divinity. He agreed with Loisy that scientific history, by itself, is unable to prove Christian dogma. Consequently, biblical exegesis, conceived in a purely scientific fashion, could never argue to the divinity of Christ. If such belief forms the core of Christian tradition, Blondel wrote, it should be unscientific to exclude it from Scripture. On the one hand, scientific history cannot by itself prove the divinity of Christ; on the other hand, scientific history should recognize this belief as central to Christianity. Blondel proposed a dilemma to the historian. Either the a priori and unscientific denial of Christ's divinity, the rejection of the Christian supernatural, and the reduction of Christianity to the condition of natural religions; or the acceptance of Christ's divinity and the Christian supernatural, at least as a working hypothesis. According to Blondel, the interpretation of biblical texts and ecclesiastical history should then be in the light of the latter hypothesis. Although scientific history by itself can neither prove the supernatural, nor disprove it, it could at least use it as an hypothesis. On this hypothetical basis, Blondel believed that scientific history would prove to be not in contradiction with Christian dogma. While Loisy rejected any extra-historical principle for the determination of what is historical in Scripture, Blondel believed that, if the supernatural is incarnated in history, the scientific historian should be able to read it there. It would seem, then, that Blondel was presupposing faith. Both Loisy and Blondel were right in their rejection of historicism: history alone cannot prove the supernatural. While Loisy tried to develop an adogmatic methodology, Blondel tried to justify rationally his dogmatic reading of history. Their common problem has not yet been solved.

Until recent years, many of the problems raised within the Roman Catholic church by the French Modernist movement, far from having been solved by the radical disciplinary measures which abruptly ended the crisis, were simply shelved and removed from free and open discussion. In the liberalized atmosphere of Vatican II, contemporary Roman Catholic scholars, cautious in their efforts to avoid any affiliation with the condemned modernists, have nevertheless raised problems, if not identical, at least very similar to those of some sixty-five years ago. The nature and scope of revelation, the character and value of the Scriptures, the methods for biblical exegesis and hermeneutics, the origin and nature of the Church, the modes of expression for ecclesiastical authority and

Christian tradition, the psychological, social, and cultural conditions for the origin of Christian beliefs and practices, the history of dogmatic development, the contemporary need for demythologization, the increased understanding of man in contemporary society, and the need for the perpetual aggiornamento of Christian doctrine and practice: all these problems occupied the mind of the French modernists and continue to be at the center of theological debates.

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A. Unpublished primary sources

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2. Before 1965, there was a serious danger that several manuscripts of Blondel, written on fragile paper, might eventually deteriorate. In lieu of a more accurate transcription, due to the lack of existing funds then, Professor Marcel Méry, with the assistance of Miss Nathalie Panis, undertook the task of making typewritten copies. Seventy-seven volumes of manuscripts and correspondence have thus been typed. These copies were consulted extensively for all the recently published Blondelian studies. Although it is easier to page through these typewritten copies than through notes written on odd pieces of paper, such as old envelopes, paper bags, and so forth, it is safer to refer to the original documents when they are still available, in view of the fact that the typewritten copies contain occasional typographical errors and misreadings. Had it not been for the generous offer of the University of Louvain to undertake the microfilming of the Blondelian archives, the copies of Méry and Panis would have been the only means of preserving certain valuable documents.

3. At the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the papers of several individuals involved in the French Modernist crisis can be easily consulted; for example, those of Hébert, Houtin, Klein, Lacroix, and Sartiaux. A special permission is required to consult the papers of Laberthonnière and Loisy. At the British Museum in London, some papers of Hügel, Petre, and Tyrrell can be consulted. In all of these archives, one comes across letters written by almost every significant figure during the Modernist crisis.

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C. *Works of Blondel Relevant to this Thesis*

1. *L'Action. Essai d'une critique de la vie et d'une science de la pratique*. Paris: Alcan, 1893. Blondel's doctoral thesis.

2. *De Vinculo Substantiali et de Substantia Composita Apud Leibnitium*. Lutetiae Parisiorum: Alcan, 1893. Blondel's latin thesis on Leibnitz.

3. "Une des sources de la pensé moderne: l'évolution du Spinozisme," *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 128 (1894), 260-275; 324-341. This article was written under the pseudonym of Bernard Aimant.

4. "Lettre sur les exigences de la pensée contemporaine en matière d'apologétique et sur la méthode de la philosophie dans l'étude du problème religieux," *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 131 (1896), 337-347; 467-482; 599-616; 132 (1896), 131-147; 225-267; 337-350. These six articles were written with the original purpose of defending the properly philosophical character of *L'Action* against the insinuation that it was merely a psychological apology for Catholicism. As Blondel developed his arguments, he engaged in a major criticism of traditional apologetics. The first section rejects certain apologetical methods because of their inconsistency as apologetics. The second section develops the really philosophical method for the study of the religious problem. The last section proposes the possibility of a mutual renewal of philosophical and religious perspectives by a fully consistent development of modern thought.

These six articles were soon reprinted in a booklet form for private distribution. Recently, they were reproduced in *Les Premiers Ecrits de Maurice Blondel*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956, pp. 5-95. Illstyd Trethowan, O.S.B. has translated them into English in *The Letter on Apologetics and History and Dogma*. London: Harvill Press, 1964; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965.

5. "L'illusion idéaliste," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 6 (1898), 727-746.

6. "A propos de la certitude religieuse," *Revue du Clergé français*, 29 (1902), 643-659.

7. *Le principe élémentaire d'une logique de la vie morale*. Paris: Colin, 1903.

8. "Histoire et Dogme. Les lacunes philosophiques de l'exégèse moderne," *La Quinzaine*, 56 (1904), 145-167; 349-373; 433-458. These three articles were reprinted in a small booklet for private distribution at La Chapelle-Montligeon, 1904. They were reprinted in *Les Premiers Ecrits de Maurice Blondel*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956, pp. 149-228. Alexander Dru translated them into English in *The Letter on Apologetics and History and Dogma*. London: Harvill Press, 1964; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965.

9. "Un nouvel entretien avec M. Blondel," *Revue du Clergé francais*, 38 (1904), 405-416; 513-531. These articles were written in major part by Blondel and signed by his friend, F. Mallet.

10. "De la valeur historique du dogme," *Bulletin de littérature de littérature ecclesiastique*, 7 (1905), 61-77.

11. "Les ingrédients de la philosophie de l'Action," *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 131 (1905), 180-186. This article was written under the pseudonym of Bernard de Sailly.

12. "Le point de départ de la recherche philosophique," *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 151 (1906), 337-360; 152 (1906), 225-250.

13. "La tâche de la philosophie d'après la philosophie de l'Action," *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 153 (1906), 47-59.

14. "L'apologétique et la philosophie de M. Blondel," *Revue du Clergé français*, 50 (1907), 545-546.

15. La notion et le rôle du miracle," *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 154 (1907), 337-362. Article written under the pseudonym of Bernard de Sailly.

16. "La question religieuse," *Mercure de France*, 67 (1907), 636-637.

17. *Qu'est-ce que la foi*? Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1908. This booklet contains two articles which Blondel wrote earlier in the *Revue du Clergé français*, on the first and the fifteenth of August, 1906, under the signature of F. Mallet.

18. "La semaine sociale de Bordeaux et le monophorisme," *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 159 (1909), 5-22; 162-184; 245-278; 159 (1910), 372-392; 449-472; 561-592; 160 (1910), 127-162. These seven articles, which constitute Blondel's major criticism of the integrists and the members of L'Action française, were written under the pseudonym of Testis. They were reprinted in a booklet for private distribution in Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1910.

D. *Other Major Books of Blondel*

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2. *Une énigme historique*: *Le "Vinculum substantiale" d'après Leibniz et l'ébauche d'un réalisme supérieur*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1930.

3. *Le problème de la philosophie catholique*. Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1932.

4. *Léon Ollé-Laprune*. *Les maîtres d'une génération*. Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1932.

5. *La Pensée. I- La genèse de la pensée et les paliers de son ascension spontanée. II- Les responsabilités de la pensée et la possibilité de son achèvement.* 2 volumes. Paris: Alcan, 1934.

6. *L'Etre et les êtres. Essai d'ontologie concrète et intégrale.* Paris: Alcan, 1935.

7. *L'Action. I- Le problème des causes secondes et le pur agir. II- L'action humaine et les conditions de son aboutissement.* 2 volumes. Paris: Alcan, 1936-1937.

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10. *Exigences philosophiques du Christianisme.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950.

E. *Works on Maurice Blondel and the Modernist Crisis*

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2. Allo, M. "Extrinsécisme et Historicisme," *Revue Thomiste,* 12 (1904), 437-465.

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